A VACATION ON THE NILE

PARKHURST

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A VACATION ON THE NILE

THE DAHABEAH "HAPPY DAYS," OUR HOME ON THE NILE

26445

A VACATION ON THE NILE

A COLLECTION OF LETTERS WRITTEN TO FRIENDS AT HOME

BY

LEWIS PARKHURST

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY
T. W. GILSON AND RICHARD PARKHURST

PRIVATELY PRINTED
1929

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THE ATHENÆUM PRESS
GINN AND COMPANY · PRO-
PRIETORS · BOSTON · U.S.A.

TO
MY PARTNERS
IN THE FIRM OF
GINN AND COMPANY

PREFACE

Having been twenty-five years in the publishing business, I determined to take a good long vacation. I had heard through friends and had read that there was very much of interest to be seen in the land of the Pharaohs, so on January 10, 1912, with Mrs. Parkhurst and my son Richard, I left New York on board the "Adriatic" of the White Star Line, bound for Alexandria, stopping at various Atlantic and Mediterranean ports en route. Leaving the ship, we went by rail to Cairo; thence up the Nile on a private dahabeah, "Happy Days."

We had invited to join our party, Mr. T. W. Gilson, a friend and business partner of many years' standing, Mrs. Gilson, and Mrs. Pond, an old friend of our family. Miss Ireline De Witt, a recent graduate of Wells College and daughter of a business associate, and John Gile, about to enter Dartmouth College with my son Richard, also accompanied us. At Alexandria we were met by Miss Watson, who was to act as our guide and teacher, and her friend,

Fraulein Vogel, both from Dresden. Our party of ten was thus assured of that strength of purpose and breadth of view which come from age and experience, and did not lack that full measure of enthusiasm which properly belongs to youth.

Miss Watson had made the trip several times, and to her knowledge of the history of Egypt and the East, as well as her acquaintance with modern conditions and the preparations necessary to make the journey comfortably, our party are indebted for a most delightful as well as profitable winter's outing.

From time to time, as I had opportunity, I wrote of our experiences to my secretary, Miss Ayer, and she very kindly sent copies of these letters to various friends at home. At their suggestion I have concluded to print these letters for private distribution. They were not originally written for publication, but were the impressions which I jotted down from day to day as we journeyed along; and my only excuse for putting them in book form is that my friends have requested me so to do, and one ought always, if possible, to comply with the requests of friends.

The illustrations which accompany these letters have been selected from a large number of photographs taken along the way by Mr. Gilson or Richard.

Although held responsible each year for properly manufacturing several millions of books, this is my first experience in attempting to publish one as an author. To Mr. Greeley and Mr. Robinson of the editorial staff of Ginn and Company I am much indebted for the form in which this volume appears.

LEWIS PARKHURST

Oak Knoll
Winchester

LIST OF PENCIL SKETCHES

PAGE

THE AZORES, PONTA DEL GARDA 3

WE GO ASHORE IN SMALL BOATS 7

ROCK OF GIBRALTAR. 11

MESSINA — MT. ÆTNA AT EXTREME LEFT 15

GOING FOR A DRINK 17

A CARAVAN OF CAMELS 19

MINIEH 25

A DAY NURSERY 33

FLOCK OF SHEEP — CULTIVATED FIELD BEYOND . . . 39

PROPYLON AT EDFU 45

TEMPLE OF PHILÆ 51

THE TINKER — HE MENDS OUR POTS AND KETTLES . . 59

SHEIK'S TOMB 67

STEPPE PYRAMID 73

DREDGER ON SUEZ CANAL 81

THE PIRÆUS 91

ATHENIAN TREASURY AT DELPHI 97

OLIVE TREES IN CORFU 109

A VACATION ON THE NILE

RELIEF MAP OF EGYPT

I

On board R. M. S. "Adriatic"
January 15, 1912

Dear Friends at Home,

Here we are in the midst of a roaring gale within a few hours of the Azores. The sun is out and the waves are mountain high — a glorious sight. We are all thankful that the first days were on a reasonably peaceful sea; otherwise we might not be writing letters. Our party are in fine shape, all good sailors now, and having as fine a time as you can imagine. We have had a following sea all the way and to-day is the first heavy weather we have felt. In two days it was quite warm and no overcoats are needed to-day. The "Adriatic" is a fine ship and we are all in splendid quarters, no better on the ship; a charming lot of people aboard, most excellent table, good music — as favorable conditions as one could wish.

I slept about fourteen hours out of the twenty-four till to-day and now I am ready for business. As the mail[1] keeps coming in from every train I wonder when you did it all. I knew we had a great team, but as I drink deeper and deeper of that beverage brewed at "29" I am almost overwhelmed by the work of artists, poets, prophets, philosophers, seers, and sages, and wonder if I have really lived all these years among such jolly humorists without knowing it. We all meet after dinner in No. 35, begin with Volume I, Number 1, and add to it each day as Richard brings in the mail. It is great fun and we all appreciate it more than I can tell. If you could hear the roar of laughter go up as each new point is made, you would realize that *Ginn Sling* is good for whatever ails you. To all who helped mix this refreshing beverage I drink your health from your own bowl. It is great stuff, as the two boys, Gilson and I, say.

We are now doubtful about landing at the Azores. Can't do so unless the storm abates, so I don't know where this letter will be posted.

[1] Our friends with Ginn and Company had prepared for each day of our voyage, fifteen in all, a paper containing original material intended to amuse and entertain us on our journey. It was styled *Ginn Sling* and was most thoroughly appreciated by all in the party. Each evening a new number was read and the previous ones reviewed.

THE R. M. S. "ADRIATIC" (28,000 TONS)

THE FOURTH DAY OUT

A BEAUTY

PONTA DEL GARDA—THE LANDING

We all feel truly grateful for the many thoughtful and lovely things you have all done to make our long journey so enjoyable. I can't imagine a party starting off under more favorable auspices. Please thank everybody, for I can't begin to call them by name. We feel that our lives have been cast among those whom it is a privilege and a pleasure to be with, and your pleasant faces will be with us wherever we may travel. I hope this will find you all in good health. I do not give a moment's anxious thought to business or home, for I know that both are in the best of hands.

With best wishes to everybody, believe me,

Sincerely yours,

L. P.

MARKET, THE AZORES

MADEIRA, FUNCHAL

TERRACE FARMS, MADEIRA

BULLOCK SLEDGE, MADEIRA

II

On board R. M. S. "Adriatic"
January 19, 1912

Dear Friends at No. 29,

Here we are off the coast of Africa en route Madeira to Gibraltar. As lovely a day as you ever saw — smooth sea, clear sky, warm as a June or July day — everybody on deck with no coats or wraps. Can there be any winter on earth? I think I wrote the first letter before we reached the Azores. We had a wild day of it and feared we could not land, but it calmed in the night. As I looked out in the morning we were just rounding the island, which rose out of the sea green and lovely to look upon — a welcome sight to us all, for we felt our longest pull was at an end. All have stood the journey well and are now fine sailors. I feel sure that Mr. and Mrs. Gilson are having a most enjoyable time, as we all are.

The landing at the Azores, as well as Madeira, is by means of small boats or launches and is not without excitement and some trepidation on the part of those trying it for the first time. To go down forty or fifty feet and then find the little boat rising and falling with every wave tries the nerves of the ladies some; but all were glad they went *and that it was over.*

Since we left the Azores the weather has been perfect, and yesterday at Madeira was one of the most charming experiences I ever had. The approach to the islands, the landing, the crowds of barefooted and barebacked boatmen diving for coins, the terraced hills rising abruptly two to three thousand feet high, every foot cultivated, with here and there masses of red, yellow, and purple flowers (I do not know their names), altogether made an impression long to be remembered.

I have sent cards to different ones in the office, which will give some idea of the strange costumes of the people, who in the main are rather poor but seem of a happy disposition and very polite to us travelers. Little boys and girls run alongside of our "Bull Sledges" and throw in flowers, and so pick up many a penny from the strangers who came in the big ship, — one of the largest, if not the largest, ever seen here.

HAMMOCK — EASY WAY TO GO UP THE MOUNTAIN

TOBOGGAN — EASY WAY TO COME DOWN

AT THE TOP OF THE HILL

MONTE PALACE HOTEL, PARTY AT LUNCH

We had our lunch two thousand feet above the sea on the hotel piazza, with the hills and gardens, the town and harbor, and the great ocean at our very feet — about the most beautiful and at the same time magnificent view I have ever enjoyed. Then we scooted down over the slippery stones in our basket sledges two miles to the shore, with gardens and flowers and smiling girls on each side. *A rare day!* Many English come here for the winter. I can imagine nothing more to be desired for a winter resort — there is so much that is strange, and enough modern to be comfortable.

We have simply been overwhelmed, since our departure, with the kindness of our friends at home. The daily mail is the event of the evening. We cannot thank you all half enough for the thought that prompted it and the great work needed to prepare such a series of entertaining papers. Maley's night with the Elks was the latest and I nearly fell overboard as I reached the climax.

L. P.

VIEW FROM MONTE PALACE HOTEL, "ADRIATIC" OUTSIDE (LARGEST SHIP EVER IN THE HARBOR)

LACE MAKERS, MADEIRA

LACE SELLERS, MADEIRA

III

On board R. M. S. "Adriatic"
January 22, 1912

Dear Miss Ayer,

I cannot begin to write you what an elegant time we are all having. Everything so far has been perfection itself. Yesterday we spent in Africa and tomorrow we are to be in Europe. Just now we are off the Balearic Islands. The sea is perfectly calm, the sky is blue, the sun warm, the islands are perhaps five miles away and with glasses we can see all that is going on. Our run to Gibraltar from the Azores and Madeira was quick and as warm as in midsummer. A perfect day at Gibraltar, then an afternoon's run within sight of the Spanish mountains, which are now snowcapped. The sunset over their tops was a dazzling picture of bright colors. In the morning we were over on the African coast and ran

within a few miles of land all the forenoon, landing at Algiers at one and leaving at nine. All northern Africa is bordered by lofty mountains, — fifty miles or so from the coast, — and their slopes and the hills are covered with farms and orange, olive, fig, and date trees. Our ship is simply loaded with the most delicious fruit. We have it at table, on deck, and in our cabins.

We were five hours ashore at Algiers, with two carriages and a guide. We saw a *heap*. The city is French and Arabian — seventy thousand of the latter huddled into a space where ten thousand would be crowded. The walk through this part of the town is long to be remembered. The streets are not over eight feet wide, sometimes only six. Strange sights one sees here. This was the old home of the pirates for centuries and conditions have changed but little — bright colors, veiled women, barelegged men, some of them horrible to look upon, brazen-faced girls, beggars galore, and filth over all. Mrs. Parkhurst's ideas of housekeeping received a shock which will last till she sees Oak Knoll again, and she exclaimed, "*Never* will I go into such a place again." I replied, "Don't make any rash statements, for this is *my time*." But it was a sight to make one shudder. The French

WE SEE THE TOWN — GIBRALTAR

ALGIERS

WE WALK IN THE GARDENS — ALGIERS

WE PASS A SQUARE RIGGER, NOT OFTEN SEEN

part of the town is clean, and the harbor is full of ships loading with wine, thousands of casks of which cover the docks, brought in from all northern Africa. We went into an Arab school — a few old men sitting on the ground teaching only the Koran. None of these people can read or write. These schools are to be closed by the government next year, and French is to be taught to all. We saw a public scribe who alone writes for all. A real Arabian Nights colony, very interesting to see *once*.

We are all pretty nearly intoxicated with our daily portion of the *Ginn Sling*. I am simply dumfounded at the wit and wisdom of its pages. Our last was a letter from the Pope and the Winchester Symposium. I want to know some time who did it all. I acknowledge that you have this time beaten all previous records. A great team is the Ginn team.

Everybody is in fine shape.

L. P.

MONTE CARLO FROM RIVIERA DRIVE

THE CASINO AT NICE

ALEXANDRIA — LANDING BOATS AS SEEN FROM THE DECK

EGYPTIAN RAILWAY — ALEXANDRIA TO CAIRO

IV

On board R. M. S. "Adriatic"
January 27, 1912

To All our Friends at No. 29,

It is almost sunset and to-morrow morning at eight we are due in Alexandria. The voyage has been one series of most delightful days and we hate to leave the ship, she has been such a good home to us all. Everything has been as near perfection as one could desire, and in this I think all agree — no sickness, fine weather, everything planned for the best kind of a time.

We spent a day in and about Nice, Monaco, Mentone, and Monte Carlo, with a forty-mile auto drive along the Riviera, and called at Genoa and Naples. In these northern cities we needed an overcoat and in Naples it rained — the first to trouble us — but as we are to return there later the ladies did not go ashore.

We left Naples at 10 P.M. and at eight next day we entered the Strait of Messina, running near the town, where we could see the ravages of the great earthquake. It was most interesting. Above all rose Mt. Ætna, white with snow and glistening like a jewel in the morning sun, with the green hills and slopes below and the great blue sea around all. I think it was the most beautiful natural object I ever looked upon and one never to be forgotten. Puffs of smoke, nearly white, came out of the mountain at frequent intervals, adding to the interest. With the glasses it seemed quite near. These two days have been warm with clear sky, a lovely blue sea, most refreshing breezes — perfect days.

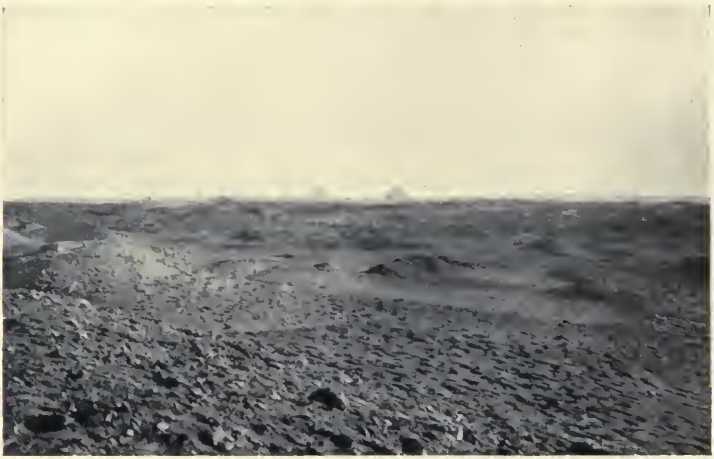
All are well and have been all the way. We are a very happy crowd, and I cannot tell you all how much the daily paper has added to our pleasure. To-night we shall open the last one. We can never properly answer them. You have done us up this time and no mistake. We hope for mail to-morrow, as so far we have not heard a word from home and we are quite a way off from old Boston. Love to all. Now for the camels.

Yours,

L. P.

PLOWING WITH WOODEN PLOW. NOTICE THE YOKE

HOTEL SEMIRAMIS. BRIDGE LEADING TO PYRAMIDS. BARRACKS BEYOND



PYRAMIDS ACROSS THE DESERT

ROAD TO PYRAMIDS

PYRAMID OF CHEOPS

SPHYNX AND PYRAMID

A RIDE AMONG THE PYRAMIDS

THE STEPPE PYRAMID

V

Semiramis Hotel, Cairo
January 29, 1912

Dear Friends All,

We had a charming trip from Naples to Alexandria and a most interesting ride in an English train to this city, passing for hours through fertile fields tilled by the natives, with camels, donkeys, buffalo cows, and native Egyptians in all colors of the rainbow on every hand.

Our first view of the pyramids was from my window in this hotel, which stands on the bank of the Nile just above a fine bridge. We looked west across the river, and just as the sun went down there they were right at hand, about eight or ten miles away. The air was clear and their lines were sharply defined — a grand sight! We drove out last night after ten o'clock to see them and the sphinx by

moonlight. We put Mrs. Parkhurst on a donkey as soon as we reached there, and with an old Arab, who claimed to have seen Mark Twain when he came here, we formed a procession and for an hour or more wound our way around these mighty works of the ancients — a weird sight and one long to be remembered. The moon was just right to get the shadows. We reached home at midnight, tired but well paid for our first sightseeing trip.

We go on board the dahabeah to-night and start early to-morrow morning.

This is a lovely city — broad streets, fine hotels. All types of men in the world are here I guess. The river is at our feet. Strange boats are moored under our windows, natives are building little fires of charcoal on board to cook their breakfasts, many of them from far up the Nile.

The weather is very warm in the middle of the day, but I wore my fur coat in riding out to the pyramids last night.

Hastily,

L. P.

NILE FROM THE SEMIRAMIS

WE GO ABOARD OUR DAHABEAH

ON DECK

LUNCH IS SERVED

OUR OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHER, MR. GILSON, TAKING LIFE EASY

OUR CREW, WITH POLEMY AT LEFT

THE REIS (CAPTAIN)

ABDUL — THE HELMSMAN

VI

On board Dahabeah "Happy Days"
Nile River
February 1, 1912

Dear Friends All,

I will begin our business year by telling you briefly of our boat and some of our doings to date.

This is really a houseboat belonging to a wealthy resident of Cairo who uses it himself in the summer and rents it in winter. It is a steel boat, very complete and quite palatial, something over one hundred feet in length, about twenty feet in width amidships, sharp at the bow, and wide and round at the stern. It draws only three or four feet of water. The floor of the main deck is almost awash and the windows of the cabin come down to the top of the rail. From the stern about two thirds is roofed in. In the stern is a saloon large enough for all to sit. Here are

writing desks, lounges, and many convenient lockers. Forward are the cabins for ten with bath; then the dining room, very spacious, the whole width of the boat, with our table set for ten; in front of that are the servants' quarters, and on the deck, in the extreme front, the cook's galley. The crew eat and sleep on the foredeck. The roof over the cabins and dining room makes the upper deck, over which are awnings. Here we spend most of the day. Lunch is served here also, if not too windy. There are pantries and closets of all kinds, many lockers and drawers, couches, easy-chairs, cushions galore, all oriental and luxurious, besides a piano in the dining room. We have two masts, one very large and one small sail, and a tug to take us along when the wind is against us. We fly the American flag, and it is reported alongshore that General Parkhurst and Colonel Gilson are on board. We have two small boats astern, one large enough for our entire party and six oarsmen, and one small one in which are some crates to contain turkeys, chickens, ducks, and pigeons which we are later to purchase of the natives — altogether a complete outfit, stocked with provisions for six weeks except such as we can get along the river.

Our crew consists of a captain and twelve men,

COSTI — THE COOK

MARIE — THE MAID

HAMED, AS HE SERVES DINNER

THE WAITERS AND LAUNDRYMAN IN WORKING CLOTHES

THE SINGER

THE CREW DRY THEIR BREAD IN THE SUN FOR THE TRIP

CREW WADE ASHORE AND PULL US IN

WE TIE UP TO THE BANK AT NIGHT

SMOKING HASHEESH

all black Berbers, with turbans and flowing skirts of different colors — very picturesque. All are barefoot except the captain, who puts on red slippers when he is fully dressed. They are all Mohammedans, some very devout, who drop down to their devotions regularly; others, with certain Unitarian tendencies, seem to depend more upon their *works* than upon their prayers. They speak only Arabic. The cook is a Greek. We have two black Nubian boys in the dining room, and a Swiss maid to look after the cabins and the ladies. There is also a Copt, who is the washer and ironer, and a boy who cooks for the crew. We travel only by day and tie up to the bank overnight. We have the best outfit I have seen yet on the river, but there may be better.

The river is from one half to a mile wide, sometimes a mile and a half, with a swift current, very muddy and full of sand bars. A man at the bow of the boat constantly tries the depth with a pole, as the sand shifts and no one knows where the channel is. We have been on a bar once, but got off with our tug in a few minutes. We run from six in the morning to six in the evening, and from our deck we can see all Egypt as we pass. Sometimes the desert comes almost to the river, and again the fertile land stretches back

as far as we can see. The river is the great highway. Everything centers about it. The water is now falling. It has gone down about eight feet. As fast as it recedes the land is sown or planted. The grain first sown is a foot high, and the natives are now planting and sowing to the water's edge. From the deck we can see with glasses all that is going on, and the sights are many and strange.

The towns are small and scattered, consisting of miserable mud huts one story high, covered with any kind of thatch that can be found. The fields, however, are very fertile wherever the water has been. Camels, donkeys, and buffalo oxen do the work that is not done by hand. The same wooden plows, the same waterpots — everything the same as it was a thousand years ago. Women come down to the bank with their waterpots on their heads, look at us a few minutes, walk into the river, fill their pots, set them on the bank, wash their faces, hands, and feet to the knees, put the waterpot (weighing, I should think, one hundred pounds) on their heads, and walk off as straight as arrows. Most have bracelets on their arms, some on their ankles, and now and then one wears ornaments in her nose. Their garment is one long, flowing robe, always black, while the men

THEY DANCE AND SING

THE TUG "ARROW" HELPS US UPSTREAM

CREW OF "ARROW"

THE REIS ON DUTY

WATCHING FOR SAND BARS

RICHARD TAKES IT EASY

SOMETIMES WE RUN CLOSE TO SHORE

BOATS LOADING WITH SUGAR CANE

wear colored garments — white, blue, brown, or black, sometimes, but not often, red. All the men and women are barefooted. They are brown, but their features are not those of negroes.

Irrigation plants are springing up where the water is pumped by engines, but by far the greater part of the irrigation is done by the river alone, and when it goes down, the water is pumped up by the old mill wheel, called sakieh, turned by an ox, a camel, or a donkey, and then carried off in ditches. Further up the river it is nearly all raised by hand, one man passing it up to another by a series of old-fashioned well sweeps, called shadoofs, each carrying it up a few feet. Boats of all kinds abound, but for the most part they are the same as in the days of the Pharaohs.

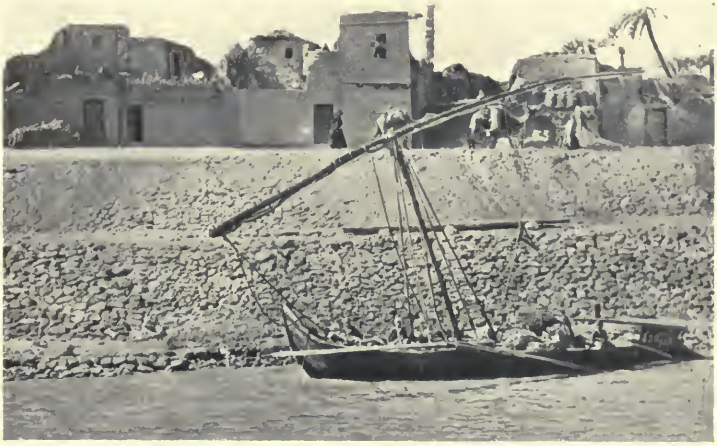
The weather is warm at midday but cool at night. To-day we have had an experience not down on the program. A sirocco, or windstorm, struck us about noon. As it came straight from the south we could not withstand it. We were blown about for a time, but finally made a shore and were tied up six hours. We could not see twenty rods. The sand was like a snowstorm and our whole outfit is simply filled with it, but the wind is now abating and we are running again.

We have seen pyramids at frequent intervals, all on the west bank of the river, and expect to make an excursion to-morrow to some ancient tombs in the mountains at Beni Hassan.

This is a fine place to sleep and lead a lazy life, and there is something of interest on the shore at every turn. Mr. Gilson is taking pictures by the score. He will have a most interesting collection.

All are well and seem to be having a splendid time. We stop for mail to-morrow. We had none at Cairo before we left. Hope all goes well at "29" and Oak Knoll. Love to all.

L. P.



A MUD VILLAGE

THE WATER CARRIERS

THE SAKIEH

SAKIEH — DISMANTLED

WOMEN WASHING ON SHORE

THE WOMEN DRESS IN BLACK

THE SHADOOF

AT LOW WATER SEVERAL SHADOOFS ARE NECESSARY

A RIVER STEAMER

NATIVE BOAT LOADED WITH *GOOLAHS*

NATIVE CARGO BOAT

THEY LOOK IN THE DISTANCE LIKE HUGE BUTTERFLIES

BOATS ARE MADE ON SHORE

SAWING LUMBER FOR BOAT BUILDING

THEY SAIL CLOSE TO THE WIND

A FERRYBOAT

VII

On the Nile, near Beni Hassan
February 4, 1912

Dear Friends All,

We were all delighted yesterday, when we stopped at Minieh, to find our first letters from home and to learn that everything was moving along comfortably. We can hardly believe your reports about the weather, it is so warm and sunny here. Tell Mr. Ginn to keep right on writing. If I had my stenographer along, I could dictate by the hour and have enough for a book when I get home. As it is, this running letter must do for all, as we are now very busy from morning till night.

We rise at about 7.30 and each gets his breakfast as he pleases — coffee, rolls, fruit, and eggs. Then we jump on deck with our glasses and *just look*. There is something new every minute: boats on the

river going a thousand miles to market at Cairo; ferries, all sailboats, carrying laborers across to the fields, which are often opposite the villages; camels and donkeys, loaded with all kinds of merchandise, some carrying stone to build dikes with, others loaded with sugar cane. At night people and animals are all huddled together in villages. There are no isolated houses in the country as we have at home. Everything is brought to the river, which is the great highway; water carriers are everywhere, for there is no water save the Nile, which is now about ten feet below high-water mark and still falling. As fast as the water recedes they plant. Last year's corn and sugar cane are now being harvested. Thousands of acres of onions and beans are now seen half-grown. The people are poor, terribly poor. A house consists often of four walls — no roof. This keeps the wind out; there is no rain. A few clothes — cotton cloth — cover them in part, and they have basket-work, rugs, or cheap quilts for a covering at night. They have not a chair, a table, or any kind of furniture. At the door a fire is built on which is a pot or kettle in which soup or beans are cooked. They rarely have any meat except once or twice a year on holidays. Their condition is most hopeless, but it is

GOOLAHS, OR WATER JARS

LIMESTONE CLIFFS

ROAD ALONG RIVER BANK. CLIFFS BEYOND

THE WHOLE FAMILY MAKES THE JOURNEY UP AND DOWN THE NILE TO MARKET

said to be better now than formerly. The English have made great improvements in the way of abating the taxes, and money is loaned at a fair rate of interest to help these people with their seed. Formerly the pashas took sixty per cent per year and in time the fields, so that most of the natives were really slaves. Now their pay is small, but they get something for their labor and have to work only a few days each year on the public lands. As I write we are passing a place where the waterpots are made for all Egypt; they are of clay, and there are loads of them beside the water.

Occasionally we pass high cliffs of soft limestone. These are being worked for lime, which is burned in kilns, and especially for stone to build dikes to keep the banks of the river in place. Every year the Nile changes its course, tearing out hundreds of acres of land, washing it on downstream. Yesterday we saw a man watching his farm slowly disappear, as the mighty river took a new turn. He was helpless and probably lost his all. Large companies are now coming in and building dikes, putting up sugar mills and trying some new methods in agriculture; but farming is mostly done by the natives as their fathers and grandfathers have done it for ages.

So we look and look until about twelve, when Miss Watson reads or talks about the country we are passing through or the things we are to see. Lunch is at 12.30. We have a fine chef, and the things he can make in his little coop are a wonder to us all.

After lunch, which is served on deck unless windy, we look again. At four tea is served (à la Miss Noyes at "29"), and as I write I am called, so will stop and try the tea and the little cakes which the chef makes.

The tea was very refreshing, as the day is warm — *hot* in the sun, but lovely under the awning as the boat moves along. Thus far we have had head winds most of the way, so our progress is not as fast as sometimes. The groves of the date palm are very beautiful and near them are all the villages. Yesterday we walked through one and also the town of Minieh, which is the capital of a province. We have to pay a tax as we pass each province, and when we tie up at night, if near a village, the sheik sends down a man with a gun to guard us, who of course expects pay for his protection. I think he sleeps all night.

The evenings are beyond description. If you look in Talbot Kelly's *Egypt*, you will see some colored

MISS WATSON

GROVE OF DATE PALMS WITH PAVING BLOCKS IN PILES

OUR FIRST DONKEY RIDE

ABRAHAM'S PASS

plates which tell in part the story. The cloudless sky in the east begins to color as the sun goes down, and we get almost the complete prism of colors from the violet, deep blue, pink, to gray and white. The moon is now full, and the evenings on the river are most delightful. This morning I got up early and found the same beautiful colors in the west as the sun came up in the east.

So we look and exclaim and admire till dinner is served at 7.30, after which, if it is warm, we go up again for a look at the moon and the palm trees as they are silhouetted against the sky; then to bed and a sound sleep, for one is really quite busy all day.

So far I have written of things as they are *now*. We have taken one excursion to the mountains on the east side of the river, to see the relics of things as they were four thousand years ago. The trip was made on donkeys. We each have a saddle which we carry on the boat; the native ones are too filthy. We all have helmet hats and veils to keep away the flies, but so far we have seen few of these pests except in the villages, where they swarm. We made a gay party with our donkeys, each led by a barefoot donkey boy, and the sheik of the village in charge of all. We were gone about four hours and enjoyed

it much. I will not attempt to describe what we saw in the mountain houses, or *tombs*, as they are commonly called. Baedeker or the histories tell it as well as it can be told. But I simply marvel at the work that those early people did. There were rooms fifty or sixty feet square and perhaps twenty feet high, cut out of the solid rock. These were the entrances to the tombs, the bodies being placed some ten or twenty feet below the floor. One must understand the Egyptian's theory of life after death to see why all this was done. Only the wealthy, the Pharaohs (or kings) and nobles, could have such burial places. The poor fellaheen, as now, were lost in the sands of the desert. Inside, the walls are beautifully decorated, and in the graves themselves have been found the works of art which fill the museums of the world. Every nation under the sun has pillaged these places, but now the government is in charge of them. We have a passport, and a guard is always present. Nothing can be taken away. The best of these tombs have gates and locks. For centuries they have been the homes first of the early Christians and then of robbers. This village of Beni Hassan was entirely destroyed by the government forty years ago — it was so full of thieves and robbers. We rode

VERY ANCIENT TOMBS HEWN FROM SOLID ROCK
AT BENI HASSAN

VIEW FROM BENI HASSAN

into a pass in the mountains through which it is said Abraham went on his journey to Egypt (see the Bible; I can't quote text). After a busy forenoon we all came in, having enjoyed our first donkey ride exceedingly.

The donkey boys have picked up a little English, and one says "Good Donkey," "Yankee Doodle Dandy"; another, "My good donkey, Telegraph and Telephone"; another calls his donkey "Roosevelt." All want you to try their donkeys and all want baksheesh. The old sheik has a big stick, and if they get too noisy he lays it about him right and left.

Mr. Gilson is taking pictures by the hundred, so I expect we will have a great show some time. All are well. I am sure we are seeing this country under the most favorable conditions possible. We go when and where we please, stop when we want to, and go on when all are ready. It is a most instructive trip as well as interesting. All say it is a great time so far.

Yours truly,

L. P.

RESIDENCE IN ASSIUT

STREET ALONG THE RIVER BANK, ASSIUT

BEGGARS

EGYPTIAN POLICE

VIII

On board Dahabeah "Happy Days"
Nile River
February 7, 1912

My dear Miss Hill,

I was very much pleased yesterday, when I went into the post office at Assiut, to find there a letter in your well-known handwriting forwarded from Cairo; also two from Miss Ayer. We stop at important places and direct by wire to have our mail forwarded from Cairo so as to meet us. Letters look good I can tell you. We are all in the best of health and spirits, and are traveling in the most luxurious manner that the country affords. Our boat is like a home, and the scene from the deck changes every minute. The river winds in and out across the desert with the narrow strip of green on each side, and as we go only about four or five miles an hour

upstream we have ample time to look everything over very carefully. While there is much that is *ancient* to see, I am equally interested in what is going on now. Every foot of green land is tilled carefully. As we are now going south all the time, the need of water is greater, and as most of the great irrigation plants are nearer the north, the water must be drawn up in shadoofs by hand or by sakieh turned by oxen, just as it was thousands of years ago. We see hundreds of these every day. At Assiut are the great mission schools of the Presbyterian church. Richard had a letter to the president of the boys' schools, who was an Andover and Yale man. I was glad to visit these schools and the American Hospital which is there. This is one of the best towns in Egypt and shows the work of these missions. I found a lot of Ginn and Company's books in use there, thanks to our Foreign Department. From this place the ancients built a large canal leading back into the desert more than a hundred miles and making the great oasis Fayum. The English have rebuilt this canal with a great dam across the river, through which we have to lock up. From this point great caravans of camels start for the African desert. Some fine residences of natives and foreigners are seen along the river banks,

SUGAR-CANE VENDER

WATER CARRIER

A NATIVE GRANARY

showing what *can* be done in this poverty-stricken country, if brain and capital can work together. It is claimed that some of Joseph's granaries were located here, which is quite probable, for it must always have been an important point. At our lesson yesterday Miss Watson read the story of Joseph as told in the Bible, quite new to *some* of us. We have enough doing to keep us busy and are ready to go to bed and sleep soundly every night, as the waves of the river lapping against the boat have a soothing effect.

Mrs. Parkhurst and Richard have both profited much by the trip, I can see, and every one says the old man himself is pretty lively most of the time. I enjoy watching the crew, attired as they are in bright turbans, red, yellow, or white, with their long flowing gowns. When five or six of them go aloft to furl the sail it is most picturesque, and at night after we tie up to the land they make a tent out of the fore part of the ship, have a little fire in their mud furnace on deck, squat around it and eat their evening meal out of a common dish — generally with their fingers. Then they smoke their cigarettes, and once in the evening get out a long pipe, fill it with tobacco and a little hasheesh, and pass it around, each man taking one long pull at it and no more till next

night. Then they begin to sing or chant. One man is a leader. He has a trombone, and another has a skin drawn over a gourd as a drum. They keep good *time*, but that is about all. After a while they begin to clap their hands, and one, the boy, gets up and dances. All begin to get excited, and pretty soon it is a wild sight. They keep this up an hour or so, the captain, however, taking no part but solemnly looking on. We give them a few coins which go into a common treasury and help supply the long pipe, I suppose. They do not drink; the Koran forbids it. According to an old custom, when we reached Assiut we gave them one pound. With that they buy a sheep. We are to do it again when we get to Assuan. This is all the meat they get on the trip. They baked bread on shore before they left Cairo, sliced it up, and spread it on the deck to dry for two or three days. There were eight or ten bushels of it. Now it is in the hold, hard as brick, and will last the whole trip. This is worked into their soup and vegetable stews and is their principal food. The crew have their own cook and prepare their own meals. They are hired for the trip. The captain is responsible to the owner for the ship, and to the government for the safety of his passengers. He is

VIEW FROM COLLEGE BUILDINGS AT ASSIUT — JOSEPH'S CANAL, DAM IN DISTANCE

ENTRANCE TO JOSEPH'S CANAL

LOCK AND SECTION OF DAM AT ASSIUT

NATIVES OFFERING SHAWLS FOR SALE

CLIFF TOMBS NEAR ASSIUT

quite a strong character, as is the first mate, who steers while the captain squats on top of the cook's galley all day long, keeping a sharp lookout for sand bars, which are very numerous and continually shifting from one side to the other. A man at the bow with a long pole watches and sounds all the time. So far we have got on only once, a very good record, as we see boats stuck every day. The water is now falling and is about half down to low-water mark, which is in April or May. We had one lively experience with a sand storm from the desert. You have read of them. We were barely able to reach a mooring and make port when it struck us with great force. It was just like a blinding snowstorm. We could not see a hundred feet. We shut all windows, doors, and shutters, and it was almost as dark as night. I went on deck once to see what it was like. In a moment my clothes were completely filled with the fine sand. Although I had on glasses, my eyes were blinded, my ears and nose were filled with sand, and I was glad to retreat. The crew wrapped themselves in their flowing robes and curled up on the floor. The storm lasted about four hours — a good thing to be in *once*. It took us a day to get the sand out of the boat. Every crevice was full of it — the sails,

rigging, everything filled with sand. I should say the wind blew from forty to sixty miles per hour. We went on shore after the storm was over and found fields of grain with four inches of sand plastered all over them. The camels lie down and bury their heads in the sand when they have to meet these storms. The sand cuts one's face like a whip. We hope not to meet another.

Mr. Gilson and the boys are taking pictures by the score. While I am not in charge, and do not now feel the responsibility of the management, I am the *purser* and have about five quarts of silver money to deal out for all kinds of service. We buy vegetables, chickens, milk, etc., each day, pay for donkeys, carriages, guides, and a tax to each district we pass through. We generally camp near a village, and the sheik sends down a couple of men with guns, who build a little fire on shore, squat down beside it, and stand guard to keep off thieves and robbers (they say). These we also pay about fifty cents each per night, and a little baksheesh to the old sheik. But I must close.

I hope you are not worrying about closing the books for the year. Don't hurry. You are now the boss and can take your time. Love to all.

L. P.

BUFFALO COW AND CALF

MARKET DAY

FLOCK OF GOATS. VILLAGE IN DISTANCE

IX

Nile River — Approaching Luxor
February 9, 1912

My dear Miss Ayer,

Our trip continues to be in every way a constant delight. We enjoy every day and every minute of each day. This is *the* way to see this country. We are close to the people all the time. Every minute the scene changes. We are now well above most of the large irrigation plants and see the natives in their primitive condition. The season is more advanced as we go south. The crops are larger and the need of water greater. All are hard at work lifting up the water by hand with the shadoof, hundreds of which line the river. It takes now three lifts to carry from the river to a point high enough to run back over the land. As the river drops it will take four, then five or six. The natives lift water all day,

and for a day's work of twelve hours get about twenty-five or thirty cents. They shout and sing and seem happy and contented at their work.

There are many flocks of goats and sheep, but the raising of grain and sugar cane seems to be the most important industry. The expense of clothing a family grows less as one goes south, and at this point can be considered almost a negligible quantity.

The climate is certainly superb from our point of view — not a cloud in the sky, cool in the forenoon, then warm, almost hot, from one to three, then cool again, and after sundown almost cold. If I sit on deck after dark, I find my fur coat very comfortable. In fact, no thin clothes are needed. On shore we wear our helmet hats, and in the afternoon the colored glasses are helpful. It is an ideal life for a lazy man, and I have enjoyed it very much.

Yesterday the river ran close to the high cliffs of limestone out of which the Ptolemies quarried their building stone. In fact, all the way we are in sight, on one side or the other, of high chains of mountains, and sometimes we see both chains — tremendous, barren, without a particle of vegetation, like the whole country where the waters of the Nile do not reach. I do not wonder that the old Egyptians

GASOLINE PUMP AND TANK FOR IRRIGATION

A NATIVE FISHING BOAT

A MUD VILLAGE SHOWING PIGEON HOUSES ABOVE THE DWELLINGS

worshiped the Nile and the sun. I should be tempted to do so now, if I lived here. In these cliffs with our glasses we can see hundreds of openings to the tombs, for all felt that the only safe place to put the dead was in these cliffs. All other places might be washed away, for the Nile at one time or another shifted its course from one range of mountains to the other, and we can see that it is changing this year.

We are not making many stops going up the river, except to visit the oldest ruins, as we want to get to Assuan before it is too hot. When we come down we shall visit the others, taking all in the order in which they were built. We are making good progress and shall reach the end of our route by the fifteenth. We can run down much faster, but shall make more stops.

Mr. and Mrs. Gilson make fine travelers. He is very busy taking pictures and they both seem to be extremely happy.

We have a splendid table, drink nothing but bottled water — Poland till we reached Alexandria, since then Evian, a similar European water.

Yesterday we met a steamer with the English flag at half mast and have just found out that it carried the body of the Duke of Fife, who died at Assuan.

We have not seen an American paper since we left New York, and only one or two English papers at Gibraltar and Cairo, so we are literally in the Dark Continent, so far as news is concerned.

As I write, the dahabeah goes aground the second time since we started, but we are soon off. We have just passed a little town; the houses are made of mud, as most of them are in all the villages. It is market day, and we ran in close to shore and saw the fellaheen all gathered in the open place next to the river, selling and bartering sheep, goats, donkeys, grain, vegetables, etc. With their many-colored garments and turbans it was a most interesting and picturesque sight. The people living along the banks of the river are mostly of a copper color, some are black, and once in a while of a lighter strain, but the fellaheen do not intermarry very much with whites.

The evenings are simply gorgeous. The colors are beyond description, especially the coloring in the east as the sun goes down in the west.

We are all feeling well rested and I am sure the trip is doing every one a vast amount of good. Miss Watson is very entertaining in her daily talks, and when we come to a place we are well prepared to appreciate what we see. I made no mistake when I

engaged her. She is a whole team, and without such a person we could not make this trip with safety or profit. I have no responsibility whatever except to put up the cash. It is quite an outfit to look after.

To-day I saw for the first time a little gasoline engine and a pump rigged up to lift the water out of the river. I prophesy that in ten years the shadoof will be a curiosity. One of these engines will do the work of forty men. So much water is now wasted in handling. The great problem here is water. Not a drop falls in the year, and without it from now on the crops are burned up by the sun.

So far I have given fully as much thought to the modern conditions as to the ancient; but to-morrow we reach the site of ancient Thebes and there we shall go back three or four thousand years and commune with the old fellows who held the fort at that time.

I hope you are all well, and am bound to think you are. I have not thought of business a moment since I left, and don't mean to. I know it is in good hands. Hope Miss Hill will not work too hard. I feel a little guilty in being away these February days, but she can do it all right, if she does not worry or hurry.

Love to everybody from all in the party.

L. P.

PROPYLON, TEMPLE OF KARNAK

COURT OF RAMESES II AT LUXOR. THE MEDIEVAL MOSQUE SHOWN IN THE CENTER COVERS A PART OF THE RUINS

X

Nile River — Passing through
African and Arabian mountains
February 15, 1912

Dear Friends at Home,

We are nearing the end of our long journey. Our crew started at five this morning, hoping to get through to Assuan to-night. We shall stay there two or three days and then turn our faces homeward. Very much to my surprise the time on the river has not seemed long. We have been busy every day; just busy enough — no hurry. The scene changes every minute. There is no dust (till we go ashore, when it is all dust), noise, or confusion. There is room enough on the decks for twenty-five people without crowding. Lounges and easy-chairs, oriental rugs and cushions make the day most comfortable. We have made several excursions to temples

and places of interest, and have come to be quite expert donkey riders. Yesterday, on our way to the Temple of Edfu, we were obliged to ride through a village. It was market day, and such a sight I never beheld. The town was crowded with natives, all selling and bartering. Everywhere were to be seen sheep, goats, camels, donkeys, all kinds of pottery, and provisions, with dust and filth over all. A man went ahead of us with a long whip and thrashed the natives to one side and the other, and we wound our way, single file, through the crowd. They were a wild-looking set, many Nubians and Ethiopians from the desert, as well as Arabs. The ladies were glad to be out of it. The sheik of the town sent two men with us as a guard.

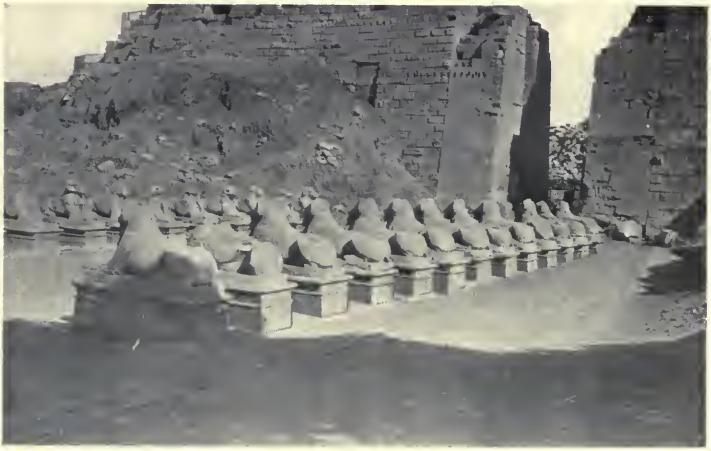
This morning the two ranges of mountains which we have seen all the way up, sometimes quite near, sometimes ten miles away, come together at the water's edge — one on the east, the other on the west. At this point the Nile worked its way through from Central Africa and made *Egypt*, which is not over ten miles wide on the average — that is, of *fertile* land — and perhaps from fifteen to thirty between the ranges.

We were two days at Luxor, where I was surprised to find three or four beautiful hotels, one surpassed

LUXOR — HOTEL AT RIGHT, ANCIENT TEMPLE AT LEFT

MAIN STREET, LUXOR

TEMPLE OF HORUS-EDFU



AVENUE OF RAMS—SPHYNXES

by none in the White Mountains, except Bretton Woods. The season here is about four months and is now at its height. Several large river boats, like the Mississippi boats, come to Assuan from Cairo and make this their principal stop. Ancient Thebes was here. We tied up on the shore opposite the town, and at night the hotels with their brilliant lights made a beautiful sight. The river here is a short half mile wide. We have a fine large rowboat which will take the whole party, and with our black, barefooted crew of six, with their white turbans and blue shirts, with one extra man to lead the singing (for they want to sing when they row or pull at the sails), it was great fun to cross and recross, especially at sundown. Our little American flag at the stern looked pretty good to us as we went in amongst the Turkish and English boats which predominated on the river.

So far we have seen but three or four American flags on the river, and whenever one comes in sight we salute it most heartily. There are some steamers of the Hamburg-American line that always salute us, but most of the large boats are Cook's, that fly the Turkish and English flags and pass sullenly by. We saluted one or two, but they took no notice of us, so now we go on with our flag at the top of the mast.

Since leaving Luxor the weather has become hot in the middle of the day, but at about four it cools down and the evenings are simply perfect. Last night the colors in the east at sunset were the finest yet. The sand is yellow here and the mountains have a grayish-pink tint. All this affects the coloring in the sky. I hope to find a painting that will approach it. Talbot Kelly is at Assuan and I want to see what he can do. If he can approach the real, I shall be ready for a trade.

Miss Watson's talks each day at 11.30 are most entertaining and instructive, and when we reach a place we know how it fits into the general scheme. I expected to see ruins and massive things, but had no idea of the marvelous *beauty* that has been covered up all these centuries in the sands and under the mud huts of the natives. They are at work now at Luxor excavating. I saw forty men on ropes trying to move a single stone which had toppled over and was covered with débris. What an army it must have taken to quarry these stones, move them many miles down the river, and then set them in position to form these magnificent temples! Some of the stones, when uncovered, show a polish as fine and beautiful as any that could be found in Mt. Auburn. Much of that

THE LONE COLUMN, KARNAK

OBELISK, TEMPLE OF KARNAK

WEST BANK OF THE NILE AT ASSUAN

SHEIK AND GENDARMES

most beautiful work was smashed up for pure deviltry, first by the Persians, when they conquered the land, and again much more by the early Christians, who felt that the work of the pagans must be destroyed at any cost; so they climbed up on the walls and dug out the faces of hundreds of beautiful figures, but left the rest in good condition. Once in a while they missed one, and so we see what all might have been. Here and there, after all these years, are bits of lovely coloring — blue, red, and green — which show how the interiors of all the temples were originally decorated. It exceeds my expectations in every particular.

We are now reading the *Ginn Sling* a second time, one number a day, after four o'clock tea, on deck. All enjoy it much; a great stunt, and a fine team at home. Everybody is perfectly well and we all feel that we owe much to Miss Watson and Mr. Polemy, who is a Greek and in charge of crew, boat, donkeys, mail, food, etc.

Hope this will find all well. Love to all.

L. P.

THE PILOT

BAKSHEESH

RAPIDS BELOW THE DAM

CANAL LEADING TO LOCKS

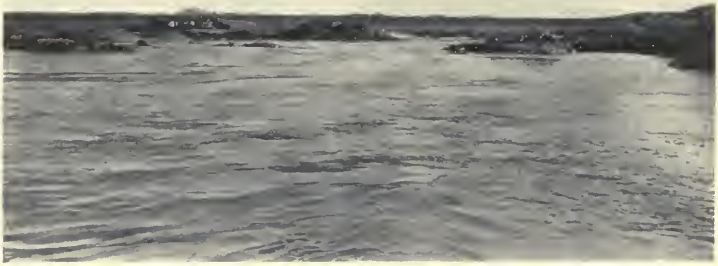
XI

Dahabeah "Happy Days"
Nile River — Homeward bound
February 20, 1912

Dear Friends at Home,

Our last day's run up river was in many respects the most interesting of all. We had camped about ten miles below Assuan overnight, and with a start at daylight were up there bright and early. This is the end of Egypt, and here begin about four miles of rapids called the First Cataract. (There is another about two hundred miles further up.) Nubia begins here. At the foot of the rapids is the town where again we find three or four fine hotels open only in the winter, one, called the *Cataract*, being very handsomely located overlooking the rapids. All steamers stop here and all sailing boats except those going on to Wady Halfa or Khartum. We, however, got

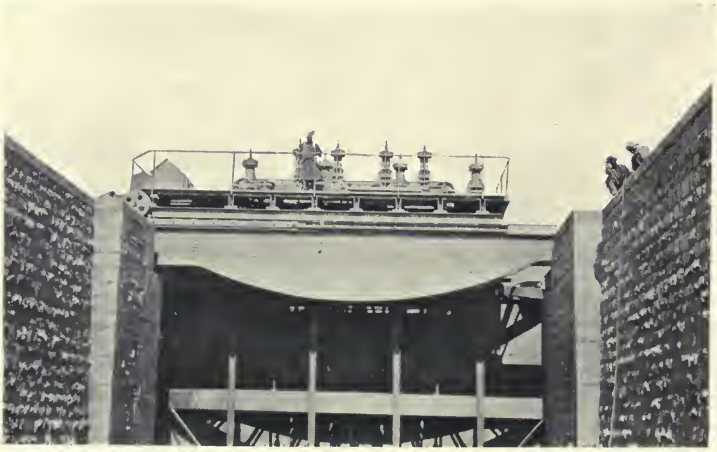
permission of the owner of our boat to take it up through the rapids and above the great dam at the head of the rapids. After a good deal of parleying with the sheik of the town we took on two pilots, one for the boat and one for our tug, and four extra men, and pushed on upstream. The sailors had been burning incense for hours to protect them from the rocks. It was a most interesting ride and we did not touch a rock. Our pilot was as fine a specimen of physical man as I ever saw, fully six feet, as straight as an arrow, not an extra pound of flesh on him, and as keen as a hawk. He handled the boat in a masterly fashion. After the run I shook him by the hand and he *salaamed* nearly to the ground. There are six locks to go through to get up past the dam, five of them in one block. We were lifted sixty-three feet, and next year twenty-two feet are to be added, making eighty-five feet in all. The dam is one and a quarter miles long and would make old Rameses sit up and look if he were to come along. The chief engineer, a Scotchman, was very courteous to us. He has been here twelve years, ever since the dam was started, and gave us much interesting information. The great gates of the locks weigh fifty tons and move like a clock. They are just putting



DAM FROM BELOW

SECTION OF COMPLETED DAM FROM ABOVE

PUTTING ON THE LAST COURSE



GATES CONTROLLED BY ELECTRIC MOTOR

NATIVE BOATS GO THROUGH THE LOCKS WITH US

WHOLE FAMILIES LIVE FOR WEEKS ON THESE BOATS

ENTRANCE TO LOCKS FROM ABOVE, SHOWING MOVABLE BRIDGE

INTERIOR VIEW OF TEMPLE OF PHILÆ

the last course on the dam. At one time he said there were thirteen thousand natives at work; however, they were all *paid*, while the old temples were built by slaves — some progress in that respect at least.

After we passed the dam we ran up the river a few miles to see the country. The mountains are here parallel to the river and near to it, and make a natural reservoir, perhaps one half to one mile wide as far as we could see, and when the dam is finished the water will go back on a level to the foot of the Second Cataract when the lake is full — a tremendous body of water. The lake will be filled this fall for the first time and then let out gradually next summer to keep the river at a higher level, and so help the poor *shadoof* man — the greatest piece of work I have ever seen.

We finally gave the signal to turn about, gave three cheers for the American flag, and headed for Oak Knoll and Quechee. We ran along close to the upper edge of the dam and from on deck could see just how the work was being done. The engineering force is Scotch entirely; a few Italians handle the cement, and the natives do the rest. The pay of the natives is about thirty cents per day — better than the old days with the overseers' whip cracking over them,

however. Of all their taskmasters — and they have had many from the days of Cambyses and Alexander — the English are by far the most humane, and will, I am sure, if let alone, do much for this people.

Just above the dam, within half a mile, is Philæ, — the "Pearl of Egypt" as it was called, — or what there is left of it. It was a rocky island with stately palms around the shore, and a small but handsome temple on the side hill. The water has almost covered the palm trees, and we go into the door of the temple in our rowboats. This is the last year one can do even that, for with twenty-two feet more of water it will be all covered, or nearly so, in the winter time when Europeans are here.

It was most night when we were ready to run the rapids, but the Scotchmen opened the locks for us (they are usually closed at three) and we went down flying. We pulled up on Elephantine Island opposite Assuan at sunset — a day we shall not soon forget.

The next morning we set out for the great quarries, for this is where the granite is found from which the ancients made all their statues, sarcophagi, altars, and obelisks. The obelisk in Central Park, New York, came originally from here. The temples were generally made of sandstone or limestone, found

THE NEW LAKE ABOVE THE DAM

THE QUARRY AT ASSUAN

UNFINISHED OBELISK

BISHAREEN GIRLS—GYPSIES OF THE DESERT

further down the river, and much easier to work. A great obelisk partly made still lies in the quarry, and the holes in which the workmen put wooden wedges, then poured water in to swell them, and so split the rocks, are still to be seen. The granite is most beautiful, some quite dark and some rather pink. All polishes to perfection. There is enough left to duplicate all the work of the Egyptians a thousand times, for it reaches nearly over to the Red Sea, two hundred miles away. Here on the west side is found the yellowest sand you ever saw, and so fine that it will sift through the finest of women's garments when the wind blows. On the east side, however, the sand is gray. I suspect these great masses of sand affect the colors in the sky at sunset, which are our daily admiration.

The Egyptians were nature worshipers and selected sometimes an animal to represent *life*. At one time they chose the ram; and within ten years, just back of where we tied up, a set of small tombs cut in the solid rock were found, with the opening at the top, and a finely cut cover over each one, which contained a mummified ram. These rams have been carried to Cairo, where we expect to see them. The tombs are left as they were uncovered. There were

perhaps twenty of these. If each ram lived ten years, that means two hundred years of sheep worship. The Egyptians believed also that there was a God of Good and one of Evil. The former was represented by the *sun*, the latter at one time by a *crocodile*. Their temples were usually built to the God of *Good*, but one old fellow thought he would be on the safe side, so he built one at Kom Ombo, which we stopped to see yesterday, one *half* to *each*, and in the *Evil* half we saw a half dozen mummified crocodiles which were preserved in a sort of little chapel at the entrance. We have seen men in our day who have tried to work both parties at the same time. There is nothing new.

I am continually amazed at the *quality* of this early work. It would puzzle our best workmen to equal it, with our modern machinery to help them.

We visited near Assuan a desert tribe something like our gypsies. They were a wild-looking lot, nearly naked, with their hair braided and greased, dirty and filthy beyond description, rings in their noses and ears, and faces painted all kinds of colors.

Each day brings something new. It is a great time for us all. For a few days the wind has been north, and it is very cool even at midday and the nights cold

KOM OMBO—TEMPLE, CROCODILE CHAPEL, PROPYLON

KOM OMBO — WE ADMIRE THE BEAUTIFUL COLUMNS

— *their* winter. My old fur coat went on this morning as I went on deck about sunrise. We have about as many places to stop at going down; we planned to take them in historical order if possible, and also to make our excursions in the forenoon when it is cooler; so while we can run much faster, it will be March 4 or 5 I think before we reach Cairo. Love to all and believe me,

Most sincerely yours,

L. P.

P.S. Found lots of mail at Assuan.

XII

On the Nile below Luxor — Going down
February 24, 1912

Dear Miss Ayer and Friends at Home,

Was glad to get your letter, February 2, and one from Miss Hill when we arrived at Luxor. This is a modern town built along the east bank of the river, with the mighty ruins of Thebes behind it, and opposite, perhaps three miles away, the mortuary temples of the old kings. Just back of these in the heart of the mountains are found the last resting places of these mighty monarchs; for mighty they must have been, and able, to have devised and executed these works which in some respects are to-day in as perfect condition as they were three thousand years ago. To appreciate what their works mean one must understand the rudiments of their religion;

then all is plain. To them the world was *flat;* the sun was their greatest benefactor, the Nile next. Why should they not worship these? The sun went down at night and in some way traveled under the earth to the east. Why not by a great river like the Nile, full of monsters as was the Nile then full of crocodiles? The *soul* of man must pass over the same course and would finally come out to life again like the sun, its father, if it could pass the terrible journey in safety. Their belief in immortality must have been the controlling factor in all that they did, for they believed also that the soul must have the same body or else it could find no habitation, hence the desperate effort to preserve the body; they must place beside it food and money and valuables of all description to last on the long journey. These also must be put where robbers could not find, hence these wonderful subterranean chambers, almost palaces, which are known as the Tombs of the Kings. In the upper part of the country these were dug out of the solid rock of the mountains; but down toward the Delta there were no mountains near, and as the river went here and there as it willed from year to year, something had to be built to take the place of these mountain chambers; hence the Pyramids, which are built

over and around the sarcophagus of the ruler, for each king started at once to prepare his last resting place, using all the men and wealth at his disposal to do this. In general he seemed to have two objects in life: to build great temples ostensibly dedicated to the worship of his god, but also to use the walls of these to tell the story of his great deeds; and second, to build his tomb in which to live during his temporary absence from earth. And these two ideas gave us the temples, which are almost all on the east side of the river, and the tombs, more generally on the west side. Tombs of lesser importance, probably of the nobles or wealthy men, are found in the mountains on the east side. We see many of the openings of these on the side hills as we pass near the mountains. Some are not more than small niches in the wall and some are the size of a small room. We spent about three days at Luxor coming down, and made an excursion each forenoon to these old resting places of the great rulers of Egypt. There are about forty of them, and one is now being dug out. A Mr. Davis of Newport, R.I., a wealthy man, is doing the work. We met and talked with him. He has made some wonderful finds in the last few years. The government gives him a room in the

Museum at Cairo, where we expect to see much that he has found. All these tombs have grated iron doors at the entrance, and are locked and guarded like all the temples. When we start at Cairo we are given a license (six dollars each) to enter all such places. The authorities are very particular. Every person must have a license or he can't go in. While each of these tombs has its own individuality, in general they are much alike. The entrances are at the base of a high cliff and are entirely covered by stone which has fallen down during the ages. One of the entrances was accidentally discovered some years ago. Since then excavations have been made along the base of the cliff and one after another of these tombs has been uncovered. I will try to describe one. The entrance was ten feet square, and the tunnel was that size all the way, all solid limestone. It pitched downhill at a steep angle for fifty or sixty feet; there was a level room perhaps thirty feet square; then the tunnel led down again to another room, and so on for three hundred and twenty-eight feet, making a turn almost at right angles on the way, and frequently starting in straight ahead with a false passage for a little way to deceive the robbers. Each room was most beautifully decorated

WE TAKE CARRIAGES FOR TOMBS OF THE KINGS

WE PREFER TO WALK

ENTRANCE TO TOMB OF A KING

A MODERN ARAB CEMETERY

in colors — blue, red, and yellow — with life-size pictures of the king, his family, his soldiers, his cattle, his boats, and with all the processes of farming, boating, hunting, etc. — all as perfect and beautiful as the day they were made. Here were stored the food and precious jewels, gold, etc., and finally, deep down in the heart of the mountain, was the chamber or sepulcher of the king. This room was at least forty feet square, fifteen feet high, with a vaulted ceiling painted blue, studded with small golden crosses to imitate the stars. In the middle of this room was a deep pit ten feet below the floor and twenty feet square, and resting in the middle of this was the massive stone sarcophagus, made in two pieces, each about three feet thick. The lower one was hollowed out, and into it the coffin was placed, and then the cover, weighing many tons, dropped over it. The sarcophagus came from the quarries of Assuan, as one could see by the nature of the stone. The cover had been taken off and set near by, and there lay the mummy of the old king with the wrappings removed from his face, in no way repulsive, but for all the world like bronze. His features were calm and peaceful, and as the inner room is now lighted by electricity (from a small plant erected near by to light about a half dozen of

the most important tombs) it was possible to see everything in the room with great clearness. When all had been done, each of these passages was filled up with the broken stone which had been taken out, and the builders must have felt that the king was well hidden, as indeed he was for a long time. It has been a tremendous task to clear out the tombs that have been found. There may be many more not yet discovered, but Mr. Davis thinks he is now in the last one of the royal family. In another locality are some tombs of the queens, and the decorations in these, showing the dresses of the queen and scenes from her home and life, are the most delicate and perfect of all. The world must have been very old at that time to have developed such work.

I hope you will pardon this long letter. As it is fresh in my mind, I want to record what I saw and my impressions. O for a stenographer! We are still having a most lovely ride on the river. We slip down with the current very rapidly. The life on deck is simply perfect these warm sunny days. We have had but two *hot* days, and then the heat was excessive only for a few hours at midday.

I met Mr. Talbot Kelly at Luxor and I hope to bring home some of his work.

To-day we are passing great fields of poppies, which have come into bloom since we went up. The river is falling. It now takes a series of four shadoof men to lift the water. When we went up it took but three.

Miss Watson's talks are most entertaining and instructive, and she knows the meaning of most that we see on the walls of the tombs and temples. Our life on the boat is most enjoyable, and I begin to feel that five weeks will pass before I am one bit tired of it. Mr. Gilson is getting a fine lot of pictures of the ancient as well as the modern. I feel that the trip is most instructive, entertaining, and restful. I never knew such a time in my life. But if one were to come here without preparation, without some one who knows the way, and without a good bank balance to work with, it might be different. I am thankful for it all and wish you and all my friends could enjoy it as I have.

Love to all,

L. P.

XIII

Nile River, one hundred miles from Cairo
Going downstream
March 1, 1912

Dear Friends at Home,

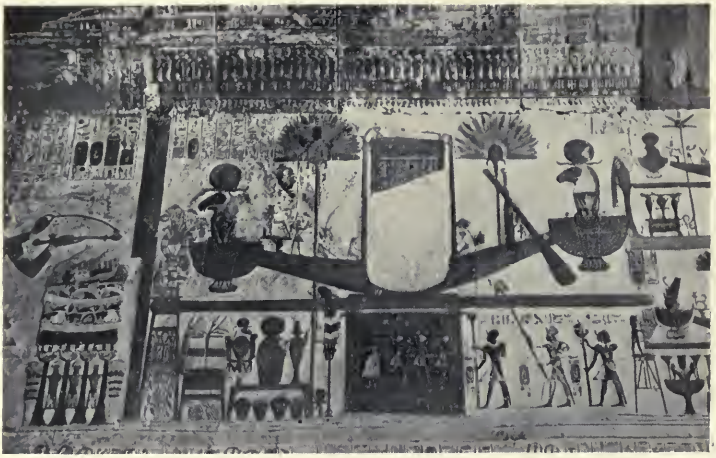
We are having just a lovely time running down the river. The prevailing winds at this season are from the north, which helped us going up, but coming down we depend largely upon the tug and the current, which is quite strong all the way. It is truly a mighty stream. The weather has been perfect; dry, warm — not too warm except two days going up; nights cool; mornings cold; not a cloud in sight, and the late afternoons and evenings enjoyable beyond my power to describe. We are now having our second moon, which adds much to our enjoyment, the coloring of the sky at night being my special delight. Quite frequently we run in the evenings until

nine o'clock, when the moon makes it possible for the crew to see, for the river is full of sand bars and is constantly changing. The lapping of the waters against the side of the boat makes it the best place to sleep that I ever knew. Eight and ten hours each night is about my average. Altogether it is the most restful and at the same time entertaining trip of my life. I was quite fearful of that five weeks on the boat, but it is nearly over and I have not been uneasy a minute. Coming down we had a little more time to observe carefully and reflect, as the objects were becoming familiar. The river is alive with the work of the natives. From our deck we have seen about all there is, and we have taken trips enough away from the river to get a good idea of the farming and the life of the country. We see work being done in exactly the same way as it is pictured on the walls of the temples erected three thousand years ago. But a change is near. Western civilization and methods are seen on the edges, and I think the English will give the poor fellah more of a show than he has ever had.

We had a most interesting day at Abydos, the ancient sacred burial place of all Egypt; in fact, burials are still being made there almost daily.

EXCAVATIONS AT ABYDOS

ENTRANCE TO AN ANCIENT TEMPLE (OSIREION) HAS JUST BEEN UNCOVERED



TEMPLE OF SETI I AT ABYDOS—BARQUE OF AMMON RA

LEADING BULL TO SACRIFICE

PROFESSOR WHITTEMORE AND THE GAZELLE

WE PAY TRIBUTE

HAMED CARRIES THE LUNCH

Richard had a letter to a Professor Whittemore, who is now in charge of excavations there, under the general direction of Naville, an elderly man, quite an authority in such matters. This made it possible to see what they are now doing — quite an unusual opportunity, as all these places where work is going on are guarded and no visitors allowed. Here were four hundred natives all carrying out the dirt in baskets on their heads. Each basketful is carefully examined for relics, as this locality is where some of the most valuable finds have come from. The workmen were fifty feet below the sand level, and we could just see the great stone covering of an *entrance* to something; nobody knows what till they get further in; but it was thought to be a mortuary temple, as it was near the tombs of many of the old nobility. The professor gave us each a piece of pottery that he took out, which must be at least three thousand years old. We tried to have him dine with us, but he could not get a guard to go with him, and it is not safe to travel at night without one. He seemed much pleased to see us and made it very interesting. To this place the bodies of the kings and all who could afford it were brought and laid temporarily, even if they were to be buried elsewhere permanently.

Just over the mountains, to the west, where the sun went down, was the end of the world. There is a notch in the mountains through which all souls passed to the lower world with their father, the *Sun*. No man dared cross into that region. There is a road from the river, straight as an arrow, eight miles to the great temple on the border of this necropolis. It is really the only highway in Egypt to this day that amounts to anything, except the streets about Cairo. Great funeral processions came on boats and passed over it for ages. It is a good road to-day, and we went over it in carriages (?). In the temple is some of the finest work we have seen. One can hardly believe his eyes as he examines the carvings covering its walls, showing the costumes of the people in every walk of their life, the colors in some cases as fresh as when new. This temple had a most commanding location, overlooking the great fertile plain to the east, eight miles wide and twenty long, every foot as fertile as a garden, the wheat and other crops now half-grown. Great herds of cattle and sheep are raised here, all kept hobbled or in close quarters, and their food cut for them in the main. We carried our lunch out here, the only time so far that we have had a meal off the boat. Our table boy took it in baskets

WALLS OF MUD BRICK AROUND THE ANCIENT CITY OF EL KAB, OLDEST RUINS IN EGYPT

FELLAHEEN THRESHING

FELLAHEEN FIELD HUT

VEILS AND FLY SWITCHES ARE USEFUL

on a donkey, and we ate under the shadow of the great pillars of the temple.

Miss Watson continues to talk each day in a most interesting fashion when we are not busy ashore. We have just finished for the second time the *Ginn Sling* and have enjoyed it immensely. There is something each day that is different from all others, so we don't have time to get lonesome.

One day we passed on the bank of a river the tomb of an old sheik who had sat in one place fifty-five years, naked, and was looked upon by the river men with great reverence. They paid him a small tribute on each trip to be sure of a safe voyage. He died only a few years ago, and now a small boat comes alongside with one of his apostles still claiming tribute, and the sailors all chip in a few piasters. This is used to keep his tomb in repair and also, I fancy, for the benefit of the said apostle.

We have only one stop more to make, at Sakkara, the site of old Memphis, where we shall spend a day. We expect to reach Cairo Sunday, the third, if all goes well, and stay there a week or ten days. We are controlled by the sailings of ships to Athens, which we expect to reach about the fifteenth and Naples about the thirtieth or thirty-first. That is as

near as I can estimate now. We can't figure as close here as Mr. Ginn does when he is looking for Aaron. I presume that he is by this time at his grandson's in California.

I have received three numbers of the Winchester *Star*, which were very welcome, as that is the only American paper we have seen since leaving New York. We don't know much about the world outside of our own, which is now the dahabeah "Happy Days." All our party are well. Mrs. Pond overdid a little and was laid up a couple of days. That is all so far. Mrs. Parkhurst has improved every day and is "as good as new." I hope this will find all at 29 and the "Branches" in good shape.

With very best wishes to all, I am

Sincerely yours,

L. P.

XIV

Semiramis Hotel, Cairo
March 7, 1912

Dear Friends,

Here we are, nicely settled in as good a hotel as one could wish. I will inclose a circular. We are all located so that we get the river view with pyramids to the west, and also we look down into the private grounds, to the south, which surround the "Palace" (as they call private residences here) of the mother of the Khedive. The gardens are lovely, palms and flower gardens in full bloom, but around all a wall of solid masonry nearly twenty feet high, with an iron gate where an officer in uniform and sword is always on guard day and night. How different from our American homes, all open to the public gaze. *Might* has been law here for ages and is so still, as the English soldiers in the barracks, and the cannon on the citadel which overlooks all and commands the whole city, testify.

Each of the large hotels gives a fancy-dress ball once a year. Last night it was our turn; the beautiful ballroom which opens into lovely gardens back of the hotel was handsomely decorated, and the *élite* of the city were here. The costumes were most elegant and some quite unique, this eastern country lending itself readily to such occasions. Many of the officers were here in their uniforms, both English and Scotch, besides the characters representing all Oriental nations. The servants of the hotel are all Arabians or Nubians, some with rings in their ears or nose, and all dressed in flowing garments, red and white predominating, with the fez or turban as a headdress. Our young people had a fine time, and Ireline danced first with John and then with Richard, all guests of the house being invited. I was very glad to see the crowd together. Dancing commenced at ten and concluded sometime after I was sound asleep.

I was glad to find a lot of mail here, also cable about the business, which was comforting, as I should feel *just at this time* especially sorry to learn that we were likely to become bankrupt.

Our river trip is over and it was simply grand in every particular; not a hitch from beginning to end.

RESIDENCE OF KHEDIVE'S MOTHER, CAIRO

MUSEUM, CAIRO

STATUE OF RAMESES II—SITE OF OLD MEMPHIS

Each day was a good one, and we were really sorry to leave the boat, which had been our home for five weeks lacking one day. We were none too soon, however, in coming down, as the river had fallen rapidly. Sand bars were in sight where we sailed across going up, and we passed several steamers and boats fast aground. Cook's new boat, the "Arabia," lost a whole day on the bars. Our crew were onto their job and we only lost about four hours altogether on account of low water.

We had many interesting experiences trading with the natives. We bought lambs, chickens, turkeys, eggs, butter, milk, and all kinds of vegetables, as well as trinkets, but not *relics*, as they have a way of making those. They always crowded around when we stopped, but were never allowed on board. If they crowded the gangplank, our crew would scatter them with a rock or, if necessary, a club. Peaceful measures are not always efficacious in this country.

One of the most interesting trips we made was left till the last. This was to Sakkara, or the site of ancient Memphis. This city was to Lower Egypt what Thebes was to Upper Egypt. It was the older of the two, and for many centuries was one of the great cities of the world. It was built on a great plain

west of the river, not more than twenty miles above Cairo. Nothing is left of the city itself. Whatever building material was good for anything was used to construct Cairo; but here were found two great stone statues, which guarded the approach to the temple in the center of the city. They are so massive that no one wanted to move them or to break them up, and here they lie to this day. They stood perhaps forty feet high, and were as fine pieces of worked granite as I ever saw. There is a portrait of a woman on the side of one, which would puzzle the most skillful workmen of to-day to equal. These are now guarded and will be preserved. This was an enormous city many miles square, and just outside the walls on the desert were the cemeteries, where millions, perhaps, of people were buried. In these cemeteries are found the great pyramids which are really made to cover the tombs of rulers. All the pyramids of Egypt are found within a distance of forty to fifty miles, as there were no mountains here in which to dig out a safe burial place for the mummy. Unless his mummy was kept safely, the soul of the ruler would have no home when it came back to earth after its long abode below. Underneath the sand, perhaps twenty feet, limestone is found. In this were dug out

suites of rooms just like a house. In the floor of one of these rooms was sunk a shaft, sometimes fifty or a hundred feet in solid rock, straight down like a well, or sometimes slanting a little. At the bottom of this was placed the body, and the well filled up and the entrance concealed. Then these rooms were filled with furniture and fixtures just as in life, and the walls were covered with pictures and writings telling of the life of the man or the woman buried there. Mr. Davis, whom we met up the river, found the finest room of all not more than ten years ago, and the furniture and treasures are here in Cairo in the Davis room of the Museum. All these chambers, of which perhaps a dozen have been found and opened, are covered up to a depth of from twenty to forty feet in the sand. There is nothing in sight but a vast desert as far as the eye can see, and it is most interesting to stumble upon such things when the opening to it is not larger than a good-sized door. Hundreds of test pits have been dug to find these entrances, many of course with no result; but when one is found it contains a most wonderful story of an age almost forgotten.

It is here that some forty years ago was discovered the Serapeum, or tombs of the Sacred Bulls, perhaps

the most astonishing piece of work of all. There is an entrance like that to the tomb of a person, and leading to it an avenue of sphinxes, all of alabaster, some thirty or forty in all. The head of one of these showed above the sand, and this led to the discovery of the tombs. These sphinxes have been dug out, but the drifting sands have again covered all but one or two. The entrance is secured with an iron gateway and masonry, and one descends an incline to reach it. It is a mammoth corridor, perhaps twenty feet high and fifteen wide, cut out of solid limestone, extending several hundred feet in length, and on each side massive chambers are cut. In each one is a giant sarcophagus of beautiful granite or other stone, brought here from a great distance, each consisting of a huge coffin and a cover fitted closely together, and many of them covered with the finest of carvings. In each was buried originally the mummy of the Sacred Bull. I think there are about twenty in all — a most stupendous piece of work, requiring great skill and enormous resources to carry out. There was only one mummy found. All the others had been rifled at some time, for much treasure was buried with each bull. The covers are half shoved to one side just as the robbers left them. One has to go up a ladder to

SPHINX IN FRONT OF MUSEUM, CAIRO

SARCOPHAGUS

MARIETTE'S TOMB

KITCHENER'S ARTILLERY

look into the inside of one of these old stone coffins. The cover alone weighs many tons. How could they make them and get them down there, is one's first thought. But on the inside of an old temple cut in stone the whole story is told — just how they were cut, rolled by hand upon boats, carried down the river, and then rolled again into place. In fact, the whole record of this people and of all their doings is found in one place or another, and is perhaps the best-known history of any ancient people, thanks to the work of the last forty years, especially the last twenty. Pictures and drawings of all kinds of work cut in the stone tell the whole story of the everyday life of the people, and a large part of it is exactly like the work now done in the fields and on the river. Not content with pictures, thousands of models of men, soldiers, women, cattle, birds, sheep, horses, boats, and furniture were made and put in the tombs or rooms near the tombs, and these are now all saved in the Museum at Cairo.

We spend an hour each morning there, going over again in the Museum the road that we traveled up the river. In general, I am not much interested in museums, but this one is the best I ever saw and means more to me than any. It was begun by Mariette and

is now in charge of Professor Maspero, his pupil. We called on him to-day and were treated most courteously.

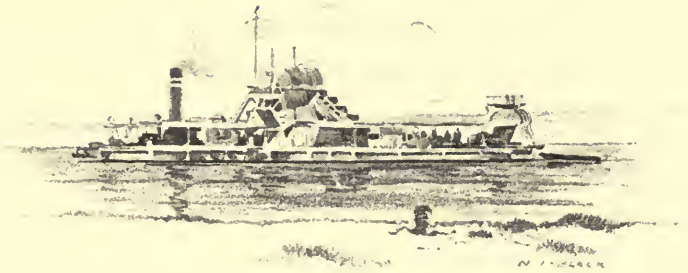
While we are enjoying ourselves here ever so much, we think of the *river* and our crew of black Arabs and Nubians who could not speak a word of English, but whom we felt very well acquainted with. If we ever went ashore, one or two always followed close at our heels like faithful dogs, and if we went into a shop, they waited for us at the door. They all lined up in their best clothes, with the captain at their head, when we left the boat, and he shook each of us by the hand. As we passed off the boat they all salaamed, and the trip was over. A liberal amount of silver coins deposited in the captain's hand, to be divided equally among them, made them show their white teeth and smile like happy children; and so we shall always remember them.

Glad to get your letters. They look good at this distance from home. All well. The men of the party are going to Port Said to-morrow.

Love to all,

L. P.

MINARET



XV

Semiramis Hotel, Cairo
March 12, 1912

Dear Friends,

I fear you will be tired of puzzling out my long letters. After I leave Egypt I don't expect to be so long-winded. These letters will have to serve as my diary, for I keep only my "Line a Day" in addition to them.

Cairo is a world in itself, and we have been very busy while here and most fortunate in many particulars. Our trip so far has been as near perfect as we could wish. One could spend a year in this town and see something new each day. We have seen much that is most interesting. In the Museum we have reviewed what we saw of the ancient in Upper Egypt; and as each article is marked with the place from which it came, and as we had been

to practically all these places, it meant much more than it would if we had gone to the Museum first.

Around Cairo centers medieval or Mohammedan Egypt. The larger part of the people are Mohammedans, and their mosques are on every hand, some built a thousand years ago, some just completed, some interesting only as relics of the early Arabian architecture, but many used every day in the year. In all I think there are several hundred. We have visited perhaps six or seven. We first put on slippers at the door and are then shown about very courteously, but not in service time, although many men are at prayers as we pass along. No women have been in any one of them when we have been there, and in general the women are not encouraged or expected to go to the mosques. In connection with nearly every mosque is a school where the boys sit on the ground in groups of a dozen to twenty and repeat the Koran. I think that is all they learn. In each mosque is a fountain, generally in the center of a great courtyard open to the sky. All wash feet, hands, and face before entering. At noon and other times in the day the muezzin calls all the faithful to prayer from a balcony that is on each minaret. These minarets are very graceful and shapely, and some of them are

made of very costly material. In general the interiors of the mosques are lined with mosaic and the altars built of precious stones — thoroughly oriental, and the wealth of centuries is gathered in them. The floors and courtyard of one is the University of Cairo, the center of Mohammedan teaching and fanaticism for the whole Eastern world. There are ten thousand pupils here, and hundreds of teachers, all squatted on the ground in groups. It was a wonderful sight — young men and middle-aged from all parts of Africa and Asia, each nation by itself; languages and costumes strange and most picturesque; men of all shades of color. Some years it is not safe for Christians to go in, but it seems to be quiet now and we were taken right in amongst them and traveled all about. There were acres of them literally. We were hissed several times, and one or two spit at us as we passed. We only looked into the room where the Turks were, as they are now pretty bitter against the Italians, and all white men look alike to them. It was a most interesting experience, but we were all glad to take off our slippers. The pupils first learn Arabic if they don't know the language, — as many do not, — then *law* as found in the Koran, then logic, rhetoric, art of poetry, all as taught

by the Koran, with religious teaching predominating all the time. Everything is memorizing; no reasoning. If schools are brought in by the English, the Mohammedan teachers in the University will have a hard time with the next generation. Already there are signs that they are beginning to think, but we do not realize in our western homes what a host of people are in the Mohammedan faith and how fanatical they are. If a religious war is ever stirred up, these border countries will suffer terribly. I sincerely hope that the Turkish-Italian war will not be prolonged, for if the fire gets started it will burn a long time.

The Cairo of to-day is most entertaining, and one can see in some of the main streets in an hour's time every nationality in the world, camels, donkeys, horses, cows, goats, sheep, turkeys, and automobiles and bicycles all in a mass together; each seems oblivious of all the others, and all manage to get out of the way and get along. There are about a million of people here. The town is improving rapidly. In the new sections the streets are broad and clean and houses are going up which would be very creditable to any city. But the old town is a sight once seen never to be forgotten; miles of narrow streets,

INTERIOR OF MOSQUE, SHOWING A FOUNTAIN OF ABLUTION — CAIRO

INTERIOR OF ANOTHER MOSQUE — CAIRO

some wide enough for two carriages to pass, some for only one, and again we must leave our carriage and proceed on foot. Every kind of work is done in little shops on the first floor and on the sidewalk, if there is one, or in the middle of the street, if there is not. The people live upstairs. The second and third stories usually project two or three feet, and they can shake hands from the chamber windows across the narrowest streets. Often boards or canvas are spread across from one house to another so the street is shaded. Here all the work of the city is done — the making of shoes, hats, all kinds of brass and copper ware, tents, saddles, harnesses, and jewelry; carpentering, spinning, blacksmithing, rope making; in fact, every kind of work is done that goes to feed, clothe, and shelter the people, and it is all done by hand — not a single machine — and some of it is marvelously well done.

The people seem to be good-natured and civil. The language of the street is Arabic. French is heard in the better places and English is creeping in a little. The Arabs keep Friday, the Jews Saturday, and the Christians Sunday — four days when all are at work. While the city and the country are nominally under Turkey and the Turkish flag is

everywhere, Kitchener, with his four thousand English regulars and fifteen thousand Egyptian troops scattered over the land, really controls. His house is quite near the hotel, and the English troops are not more than fifty rods from here. Most of the native troops are scattered, while he holds the English near Cairo and Alexandria. With these and the cannon on the Citadel the Turk will never get in again, and the rank and file of the people are glad of it. The pashas hate the English, and well they may, for they can no longer rob the poor fellah as they did for nearly a hundred years. For the first time he is having a show, and in ten years more, if England holds on, he will be a different man; but it will take generations to make him fit to take care of himself. Here, as at home, the politician is the fellow that makes the trouble.

I met Talbot Kelly, the artist, up the river. He and his wife invited us to tea here in Cairo and we have had the pleasure of entertaining them since. As he has been here for thirty years a part of each year, is himself an officer in the English army, knows Kitchener and all the army men well, and is frequently called in by the Khedive to talk over matters, I have been able to get pretty close to the

ENTRANCE TO SUEZ CANAL

STATUE OF DE LESSEPS

situation here from the English and also the native standpoint. It is an intricate and interesting problem, but England I think has it well in hand, especially as she also controls the Sudan, which really controls the Nile, and the Nile is Egypt.

We had a most interesting day at Port Said. It is about a hundred miles down there, twenty through the delta with the finest farms I ever saw, every foot worked *by hand* like our gardens, thirty miles through the Arabian desert to the Canal, and then along the side of the Canal for the last fifty miles, or about half its entire length. We passed through the land of Goshen of the Bible and the country in which Moses operated. The old caravan route is very plain to this day and could not have been elsewhere, as there is no other way to pass to Asia. I was surprised to find that we were only one hundred fifty miles from Jerusalem, but we were advised not to go there this year. There is a magnificent statue of De Lesseps at the Mediterranean entrance to the Canal and a vast amount of shipping in Port Said. Every flag that I have ever heard of was to be seen but one, and that was the flag of the United States. We felt bad that we were not represented in such a great collection, but we are not much on the ocean, and

I fear our Western congressmen do not fully realize what a *merchant marine* would mean to us as a world power.

I intended to mention the funerals and weddings. Each procession of these is preceded by *music* (?), sometimes a band, sometimes only a drum or tom-tom with singers. At funerals the body is wrapped in cloth as the mummies used to be, though of course they are not now treated as formerly (see Bible for Joseph's father), and borne on the shoulders of five or six men, with frequent changes if the person is one of importance, as it is considered a great privilege to carry the dead. The funeral of a pasha while we were here had as many as five hundred men in the procession. Women are never seen in funeral processions. All women on the streets have their faces covered; the poorer class have a shawl drawn over the head and face, while the better class wear either a black or white cloth up to the eyes.

Our ladies had a rare experience last evening. Through Mrs. Talbot Kelly they were invited to a "Mohammedan hen party." The ladies of the Khedive and other first families gave a fête in a private residence, or palace, for some charitable purpose; no men wanted, or at least not invited. There were

tableaux showing Eastern costumes, wedding ceremonies, dancing, singing, etc. Some two hundred or more were present — a few English, no other Americans. Black eunuchs were in attendance, looking after their masters' interests, and the ladies of the harems were for once having a gay time. The greatest entertainment for our people was to see the guests. As near as I can make out it was a show of jewelry, paint, powder, and fat women, some of them of tremendous proportions. That is about all I have heard so far. By the time I get home I may be able to tell quite a story. At any rate, our ladies did not get in till after midnight, and I guess they *saw* considerable.

Well, to-morrow we are off — six weeks and three days in Egypt and every one of them with clear sky, bright sunshine, and just cool enough to be bracing; air perfectly dry and pure, wind either from the desert or the Mediterranean; a perfect climate and a most interesting and enjoyable trip.

Love to all.

L. P.

XVI

Palace Hotel, Athens
March 18, 1912

Dear Friends,

Our trip from Cairo to Athens was uneventful, but most interesting and enjoyable. It is one hundred miles from Cairo to Alexandria, and from its suburbs to the sea it is one great garden. As far as one can see, fields as level as the floor stretch away on either side, and excepting the little spots allotted to villages all is most carefully cultivated by hand. The clover was knee-high, peas and beans and tomatoes were ripe, and our ship going north was packed full of great baskets of these going to southern Europe. As these crops were coming off, the land was prepared for cotton, which is now being planted and is raised in great quantities in the Delta, although it is still a question whether this will be a permanent crop, for

it is found that the land will not stand it but a few years. Formerly the Nile had several branches running through this territory. Now there are but two, but the whole section is covered with a network of canals which are controlled by a great dam below Cairo, so that instead of an annual inundation the water is supplied all the year round. With the great dam at Assuan nearly all Egypt will be so watered, for in the hot weather of summer, if water is kept off for a week, the crops are lost. So in Upper Egypt thousands of men with the shadoof and sakieh are still working day and night to get the water up out of the Nile to the crops. All this will change in a few years, and the men will be put to work on the land. It is estimated that the acreage of good land will be doubled in the country by these dams; for water is all that is needed to secure crops, and not a drop comes from the sky in northern Egypt and not much in Lower Egypt, except close to the sea. Other improvements must come. In the whole country I did not see a single wheelbarrow or shovel or steel plow. Farming, canal building, and all kinds of heavy work were done with a *bog* hoe and a basket, and where a plow was used, which was not very frequently, it was the same old wooden plow drawn by

THE OLDEST OBELISK IN EGYPT — HELIOPOLIS

oxen, an ox and a cow, or a camel to take the place of either. I did not see a single horse working in the fields, and all these tools and methods of work are exactly the same as in the pictures on the walls of the tombs and temples thousands of years old. As we rode to the station I counted over fifty men with ropes drawing a small steam boiler through the streets of Cairo, just as they drew the stones and columns for their pyramids and tombs. Two or four horses would have done it easily. They are putting in water pipes in Cairo, and I walked the whole length of the work to see how it was done — five or six hundred men and not a shovel in the gang; mattock and basket were used, and if the dirt went far it was carried on the head. As happy a set as I ever saw, always singing at their work, for now they are *paid* (twenty or thirty cents a day), while formerly they were seized and made to work for nothing and pay taxes on their crops at home. If the crops burned up while they were away, the taxes must still be paid or the land would be taken. In this way grew up the great estates of the pashas. No wonder the pashas hate the British. How a people could survive such oppression and outrage all these centuries is a wonder to me.

Just outside of Cairo we pass through Heliopolis, the seat of learning and religious teaching of ancient times. Nothing remains but a single beautiful obelisk of Assuan granite in one piece, some sixty feet high, which is completely covered with inscriptions finely cut, and the whole most beautifully polished. It stands in the midst of a great wheat field, and I sincerely hope that Morgan or Carnegie will not carry it off to New York or Pittsburgh.

Our train was a boat express and made only two stops; a good roadbed ballasted with broken stone; an English corridor train with dining car. The ex-Grand Vizier of Turkey had been a couple of days in Cairo and went down on this train with several attendants. He was accompanied to the train by many officers and friends and much ceremony, which was repeated at Alexandria when he came on our boat a few minutes before we sailed. All his party were in European dress with the exception of the red fez. They were a fine-looking set of men. They greeted each other by kissing on each cheek, and all kissed the vizier's hand as they left him on the boat. We saw him frequently further along. I wondered, if they kissed the men twice, how many times they kissed the women when they got home.

THE ACROPOLIS AND MARS HILL

THE PARTHENON

ACADEMY OF SCIENCE — ATHENS

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Alexandria is an up-to-date, smart, commercial town, and is growing rapidly. It has long stretches of fine docks, and the harbor was full of vessels, a large number of Turks not daring to leave port on account of Italian gunboats which were supposed to be in the vicinity. We went north on a ship of the Khedival mail line running twice a week from Alexandria to Constantinople and stopping at Athens and Smyrna. It was only five thousand tons and looked pretty small compared with our good old ship the "Adriatic," and when we saw the white caps rolling in outside the breakwater there was some *thinking* but *little* said. However, the wind went down early, the sea all the way to Athens was like the proverbial mill pond, and we enjoyed the trip very much. The ship flew the English flag, but was manned and officered by Italians, Greeks, and Turks, a motley crew, and not a word of English spoken in the lot, except by the captain and first officer, an Italian and a Greek. Again we looked in vain for an American flag in the harbor, but as we came out the "Arabic" with a "Clark's party" was seen outside, and she had our flag as well as the British at the masthead. It looked mighty good. The trip takes two nights and one day. The weather was fine, the sky clear, but as we

neared Greece we began to feel that we had left behind us the warm weather. While the pleasantest part of any journey is usually the home-coming, we watched "Egypt Land" till it was out of sight, and felt that we had left behind a friendly people and a most charming place to winter. Six weeks and three days, and every one of them sunny and pleasant, and every one full of interesting experiences. I never expect to have such a restful and interesting and instructive season again, as I certainly never have before.

We passed close to Crete. It is a bold and rocky island, one mountain rising eight thousand feet high and covered with snow for quite a way from the top. The boys were sorry not to see a battle between Turks and Italians, but the rest of us were satisfied to go peacefully on our way. The approach to Athens in the early morning was most inspiring, as there are many islands and beautiful bays along the shore, the water blue, and far up on the hill the Parthenon.

All well.

L. P.

UNIVERSITY — ATHENS

THE MOUND AT MARATHON — HERE WERE BURIED THOSE ATHENIANS WHO FELL IN THAT BATTLE

THE PLAIN OF MARATHON, WITH THE ISLAND OF EUBŒA IN THE DISTANCE

AN ALBANIAN—ONE OF THE KING'S GUARD

XVII

Palace Hotel, Athens
March 20, 1912

Dear Friends All,

The sunny skies of Egypt have followed us here, and the weather, though somewhat cooler, is all that we could ask for. When we ride our heavy coats are very welcome. In fact, there are two things that I should recommend any one to take who is to spend a season around this Mediterranean country — a fur coat and a fairly good bank account. Without either he is likely to suffer. I think there have not been more than ten days in all, since I left Boston, that I have not had on my fur coat at some hour of the day.

After the wonders of Egypt I had thought that Greece might seem a little tame, but I find that it is still full of interest and the basis of our Western civilization, although it in turn no doubt drew from the

East. Athens is inland, and one approaches it by the Piræus, the harbor town, which is about five miles distant. The town is so well concealed by high hills that it is not seen from the ocean until you are at the very entrance, which is so narrow that two ships could barely enter abreast. No ship goes in or out except between sun and sun. The city has improved vastly since I was here nine years ago. It contains about 160,000 people and is a clean, wholesome-looking place; it seems especially so to us after our experiences further East. The streets are broad. Most of the town looks new. All the public buildings, of which there are many, and a large number of private residences and business houses are built of white marble. All the buildings are of stone or brick and plastered, painted white, so that the whole city looks *white*. As there are very few trees except in some of the old residents' gardens, it is somewhat dazzling to the eye, especially at midday, but at night and morning it is very attractive. The sunsets here, while not to be compared with those in Egypt, are considered very lovely, and so they are. Byron describes one, I think, in "The Corsair." Our hotel looks to the west, and the sun goes down over the mountains, leaving an outline of the Acropolis

and Parthenon, which in the twilight makes a lasting impression. This is a country of mountains on all sides. Athens is surrounded by them at distances of from three to fifteen miles. Of course the central point of interest here is the Acropolis, and we have been up there several times. It was originally a great hill rising up right out of the valley, almost perpendicularly, to the height of five hundred feet. The point was cut off and the sides terraced up with masonry, so that there is now a level spot of perhaps six acres on top. From here one can see in all directions, and here the ancients first built their fort. Afterwards it was the meeting place of the town, and finally they built their great temple to the goddess for whom they named their city. The Persians destroyed the first one, but the ruins of the last one and the old foundations of the first one are still here, and enough is left to prove at once the claim that it was the most perfect building ever erected by man. There is more connected with this spot that affects *us* of to-day than with any place I have ever stood upon. Almost within a stone's throw is Mars Hill, where St. Paul spoke; a little to one side on another hill Demosthenes addressed his people; in a cave near by Socrates was imprisoned;

and along the west side is the old outdoor theater of Dionysus, where the great Greek plays were first put upon the stage. The bay of Salamis is near by to the west, where Xerxes saw his fleet utterly destroyed and his conquest of the western world brought to a halt. Had the result been different, there might have been no western world; and if America had been discovered by the Mohammedans, which is doubtful, instead of Harvard College and the Athenæum Press at Cambridge there might have been a lot of fanatical priests squatted on the ground as at Cairo, trying to prove that the Koran of the fourth century contained all the law, philosophy, and religion necessary for us of the twentieth. But I didn't intend to deliver a lecture, only one can't help thinking of these things when right on the ground.

Our young people with Miss Watson have gone down into the Peloponnesus for two days. Mrs. P. and I went before, so we concluded to stop here and take a rest. They will visit Nauplia, Argos, Mycene, etc. Miss Watson has the whole history of this country at her tongue's end, and it is a mighty fine chance for Richard and the others. We had a fine ride in autos out to the battle field of Marathon about twenty miles

northeast, and situated on about the loveliest bay you ever saw, with the island of Eubœa in sight. The road newly completed is the best in the country. We passed close to the great marble quarries, where old Athens as well as new found its beautiful building material, and out of which Praxiteles and the rest made their famous statues. The country is poor, the land is poor, the people are poor. The great crop is small grapes. Very few trees are to be seen except olives and a few scrub pines and oaks on the mountains. While this is nominally a kingdom, it is really a republic.

Next Sunday the general election takes place. One hundred and eighty-five members of their Assembly or Congress are chosen, and there is more politics to the square mile than in Ward Eight of Boston. There are rallies and processions, bands, fireworks, red fire, speeches, etc. every evening. To-morrow night there will be a monster rally in the great square before the king's palace, addressed by the prime minister. When we were coming back from Marathon we saw many people gathering at a tavern on the road, and as we came up an auto with six men drove in from Athens. All hands were *treated* and there was much hand-shaking. We stopped, and

finding one of the six men could talk English, I ventured to speak to him. As soon as he saw we were Americans he said: "This is the Prime Minister. We are electioneering à la Roosevelt." I noticed a half-dozen men with rifles near by and asked him about them. He said: "It is better to have them *near*. Sometimes our people get hot."

The dress here is entirely European, except now and then a peasant in an Albanian costume. The King's Guards wear this uniform, which is red, white, and blue, the white and blue predominating, and is very "fetching." The language of the street is modern Greek, and French is next in importance. English is rarely heard except in hotels. This is the land of the Greek church, and the old calendar is still used to-day. Our 20th is their 7th — thirteen days difference. If you did not hear the people speak, you might think they were a lot of Bostonians, except that there are not so many kinds. There are very few foreigners here. I like the looks of the people very much, and I think they are on the road to better times. The present prime minister, whom the best people seem to be supporting, is apparently a level-headed business man, which is what is needed here at this time, as the king is merely a figurehead.

This might well be called the Mecca of all who have to do with the Athenæum Press. Athena is seen in some form or other on every hand. The Parthenon was built for her, and near it stood her statue, forty-nine feet high, a copy of which we still keep over our front door in Cambridge. Her helmet was tipped with gold, and it was the first thing the Greek sailor sighted when he returned home from his trading or warlike expeditions. I was glad to have an errand to the American consul's, for I found him a Yale man, '85, and a fine fellow. We had a good chat. From there I went to the American School of Archæology and found Professor Gulick of Harvard, a cousin of our author. He and Mrs. Gulick called on us later. He wished especially to be remembered to Mr. Thurber.

Corinth
March 25, 1912

Since I commenced this letter we have had perhaps the most strenuous part of our journey. We decided to go to Delphi, famous in olden times, as you know, for the celebrated Delphic Oracle, which foretold the fates not only of the Greeks, but of the peoples of Asia Minor and later of the Romans themselves after they conquered the Greeks. It is

out of the road of everyday travel, and it meant an extra effort to go there. But we set out one morning at nine o'clock from the Piræus on a small steamer officered and manned by Greeks, sailed out through the bay of Salamis and through the canal across the Isthmus of Corinth, which is about four miles long, cut through a clay bank about two hundred feet deep and one hundred feet wide on the bottom, into the Gulf of Corinth. It began to blow when we were in the bay, and when we got into the gulf it was a tremendous gale, wind dead ahead, and the waves as high as the ship. We were due to reach Itea, the port of Delphi, at 4 P.M. We got in at 6.30. It was still blowing a gale, and the landing was in the offing in small boats which came out from the shore. I will not describe in detail the adventures and incidents of the day and landing. It was all you can imagine and about all we could stand, but we got there all right.

Delphi is in a deep valley, or gorge, two thousand feet above the sea, with a perpendicular cliff of another thousand feet hanging over it, and old Mt. Parnassus eight thousand feet high back of that, covered with snow — a most impressive location. A road has now been built to it, zigzagging across the

face of the mountain — fifteen miles to go up the two thousand feet. We got there at 9.30 and were ready to turn in without consulting any oracle. Our hotel was primitive, each room not unlike a hermit's cell — four walls and a floor, all of cement. The furnishings consisted of a bed and a candle. But all agreed that it was about the *best* place we had found.

The next day was clear and lovely, and the views over the gulf and among the mountains, as far as one could see, were well worth the climb. The Castalian Spring, the ruins of the Temple of Apollo, the foundations and many parts of the buildings, and statues and votive offerings brought here by all the states of Greece and many wealthy foreigners, although much has disappeared, still give one a very good idea of the magnificence of this city of statues and temples, built high up on the mountain side, terrace after terrace, the whole surmounted by a well-preserved stadium almost as large as the one at Athens. Twenty-five thousand people could now sit on the seats that are left. These were all built of solid marble, as were the buildings and statues. I was never more amazed in my life than to find such a collection in such an inaccessible location. To this spot came all the learned and wealthy, the great soldiers

and statesmen of ancient Greece, to learn what was in store for them. A shrewd lot were the priests who managed the old sibyl, and then, as in later times, the people seemed to enjoy being humbugged. Our trip down the mountain by daylight was most enjoyable, and the sail down the gulf back to Corinth, with calm seas, was such a contrast to our previous experience that we forgot all about it for the time; but it will be long before we quite forget the Gulf of Corinth, and we shall always have the feeling that when she wills she can *go* some. We stopped here overnight at a very neat hotel, although small, and go on to-night to Patras, where we take ship for Brindisi and train to Naples, stopping a few hours at Corfu.

The election is over, and for enthusiasm and noise it beats anything I have ever seen. Fourth of July, a national election, Christmas, and Thanksgiving combined could not approach it. The prime minister is assured of his reëlection and there is great rejoicing. They have been a week getting ready to vote, and it will take them a week to get over it. From the youngest boy to the oldest soldier who fought in the revolution, all hands are out, and it is a sight worth seeing. This morning on the first

train the prime minister came here and was met by a crowd who carried him to this hotel, where he took refuge for a time. We Americans shook hands with him and told him in our poor French and English how glad we were that he was to continue in office. The boys thought it was *great*.

I thought when I left Egypt I would not write any more long letters, but I am afraid this is the longest of all.

Everybody well.

Yours,

L. P.

XVIII

Adriatic Sea, near Corfu
March 28, 1912

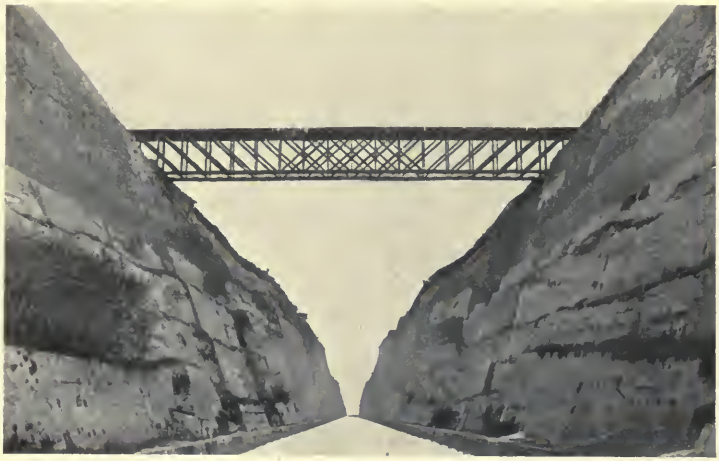
Dear Friends,

Our trip from Corinth along the south shore of the Gulf of Corinth is a very pleasant memory, a repetition of a similar trip nine years ago. But the railroad improvements here, as well as all over Greece, have been very great in that time. We now find clean cars, a rock-ballasted roadbed, and larger engines, so that the running time is much reduced and the comforts of traveling much greater. The same can be said of the hotels. While they are yet far from modern, still on the whole we were made quite comfortable, which was not true nine years ago.

This ride along the gulf is in many ways the most entertaining bit of railroading that I have ever

enjoyed. For miles and miles we run close to the shore through a succession of vineyards, for this is the great industry of Greece. The vines are cut back close to the ground and look like stumps of trees. The small seedless raisins are grown in vast quantities, and are a principal export of the country. Among them in spots are also large groves of olive trees, which may be found all over Greece, and are about the only cultivated trees we see.

The gulf itself is perhaps from ten to twenty miles wide, and its waters are constantly changing in color — many shades of green and running up into the violet, especially toward sunset when the western sky is very red. We see all the colors of the rainbow on the surface of the water. Across the gulf are great ranges of mountains separated by deep valleys, the highest mountains covered with snow and all very rugged and barren, for there is no growth of wood on these mountains, and they, too, change their color as the sun strikes them at a different angle. Altogether it keeps one's interest up and makes the journey seem much shorter than such trips usually are. Above the vineyards are the pastures, and here we see great herds of sheep and goats with the shepherds and their crooks, always



THE CANAL ACROSS ISTHMUS OF CORINTH WITH RAILWAY BRIDGE ABOVE

THE ROAD TO DELPHI

THE MOUNTAIN BACK OF DELPHI

BEFORE THE CAVE OF THE SIBYL AT DELPHI

accompanied by their faithful dogs, and the shepherd's pipe is still to be heard as in the olden days.

At Patras we went on board this ship of the Austrian Lloyd line, which is clean and well manned — quite a contrast between it and the Turkish boat, and it shows clearly the German management so much to be commended. Two nights and a day will take us to Brindisi. We came into Corfu about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and the sail along its shores and into its splendid harbor was most enjoyable.

While this is now a part of Greece, it was held for four hundred years by the Venetians, then by the Turks, and afterwards by the English. Gladstone was in charge here for a number of years, and the English made fine roads all over the island. Two great medieval stone fortresses guard the entrance to the harbor, and they were, no doubt, impregnable when built, but modern guns would batter them down in a few hours.

We have five hours ashore here, and take a lovely drive back into the country, which is one mighty olive grove, there being over ten million trees in good bearing condition, and vast quantities of olive oil are exported. On one of the highest cliffs of the

island the Empress Eugenia built a fine palace. We drove up to it and entered the grounds, from which we got a grand view up and down the sea and across into Turkey, as the sea a few miles north of Corfu is less than two miles wide. The emperor of Germany bought the palace two or three years ago, and as some of the family were there we could not enter it, as we did when I was here before.

Later, at Naples

I have been so busy that I nearly forgot to finish this letter and post it.

After our experience on the Gulf of Corinth there was considerable anxiety on the part of some members of our party (I mention no names) about the Adriatic trip, but we were happily disappointed, for the waters were calm, the skies clear, and a fine moon at night, so we all enjoyed it much.

At 4 A.M. we reached Brindisi (the Brundisium of the Romans), and were all hands summoned to the main cabin to be looked over by the Italian doctor who came on board. All persons coming in from the East must be examined for traces of cholera, smallpox, and other contagious diseases to which we were supposed to have exposed ourselves while in

THE RUINS OF THE TEMPLE OF APOLLO AT DELPHI

A SECTION OF THE STADIUM AT DELPHI

CITADEL AT CORFU

INNER HARBOR OF CORFU

the Orient. He looked me over a bit and wanted to know if all my party were in as good condition as I was, and I took oath that they were. He said, "All right," and gave me papers to permit landing — a big farce in our case, but no doubt necessary.

As we went off the ship we saw standing upon a small hill a marble column, perhaps sixty feet high, which marked the eastern end of the Appian Way. This famous road runs from here straight to Rome, and over it the Roman cohorts marched on their way to take boats to Greece and the Far East when Rome ruled the world. It is still the starting point for the Eastern steamship lines, and all our quick mail to Egypt came via this port.

As we land here, although we are some ways from Oak Knoll, we feel that we have got home, or at least have arrived at the well-beaten path that is followed by all who come to Italy, and from this point on I think you will all know in a general way about what we are looking at.

The weather continues fine, cool, and clear, and so far we have not been delayed a moment by stormy weather.

Yours,

L. P.

On the opposite page is a reproduction (reduced about one half) of one of the fourteen pages of a Coptic manuscript written on vellum, found in Luxor and presented to Mr. George A. Plimpton of New York. I purchased it of Mohareb Todius, who has been German Consular Agent at that point for many years, himself an Egyptian and a Copt. The manuscript had been turned over to him by a Coptic priest who had found it in one of the old monasteries. After reaching Cairo I took it to the Egyptian Museum and showed it to Professor Maspero, the Egyptologist, who pronounced it genuine. He was able to read portions of it. He stated that it is very difficult now to find anything of that general character. It has since been found that the rest of the manuscript is in the library of the late J. Pierpont Morgan. The volume itself is a translation of the book of Luke, written about 884 A.D.

L. P.

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